

MYTHIC STRUCTURES IN
THE WORKS OF C.S. LEWIS

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Objectives

The main objective of the study is to explore myth in the works and thought of C.S. Lewis through the insights afforded by the phenomenology of myth determined by Ernst Cassirer. The study thus develops a new appreciation of the symbolic form of myth in the works of C.S. Lewis. Cassirer's symbolic form of myth involves special ways of forming an experience of the world and a mythical worldview, including mythically characterised perceptions of space, time and number, mythical intuition, myth's inner form, symbolism and the evocation of the mythical image world. These characteristics are the key factors in the evocation of mythical consciousness and it is the objective of this study to demonstrate the operation of these phenomenological characteristics of myth in the works of C.S. Lewis. The main texts involved include the writings of C.S. Lewis, particularly his fictions, and Ernst Cassirer (see bibliography).

Abstract

The thesis introduction identifies the many theoretical approaches to myth, and reveals the need to find a new approach to the study of myth in the works and thought of C.S. Lewis. Most approaches to the study of myth are criticised by Lewis and his literary group of friends, known as the Inklings, as reductive. In contrast, Lewis proposed a more holistic, transcendent power of myth. The first chapter explores the specific importance of myth to Lewis' developing thought, from his early experiences of Norse myth to the development of his views in debate and through his involvement with the Inklings. Tensions and inconsistencies in Lewis' statements about myth are explored and the chapter culminates with Lewis' appreciation of myth in Christian faith, literature, and his realisation of myth as an object of contemplation. Chapter Two explores and contrasts the theories and approaches to myth of Ernst Cassirer with those of Lewis. Both thinkers are compared and areas of similarity and difference are identified, including their reactions to the problem of myth and Nazi ideology. Chapter Three applies the phenomenological traits, characteristics and principles of myth developed by Cassirer to Lewis' science fiction fantasy *Perelandra*. Mythical consciousness is evoked in this work through mythical images, the inner form of myth, and the type of worldview that threatens to engulf Ransom. We can observe the way that myth involves a sense of unification. Chapter Four identifies the symbolic form of myth in *Till We Have Faces*. The general characteristics of myth are explored and the inner form, or particular logic, of myth is revealed to actively form the mythical relations that dominate the lives of the characters. The function of myth as a form of thought is explored in the novel. Chapter Five delineates the symbolic form of myth within *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, with particular emphasis upon Lewis' handling of demonic and divine forces and the mythical concept of sacrifice and rebirth. In conclusion, a more holistic appreciation of myth in Lewis' works and thought is developed through the application of Cassirer's myth principles to Lewis' works. Apparently disparate aspects of myth are revealed to have a cohesive unity in mythical consciousness.

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Contents

Page

i	Objectives
ii	Abstract
iii	Acknowledgements
iv	Contents
	Introduction
1	‘An Overview of Myth Theoretics’
	Chapter One
47	‘C.S. Lewis’ Thought on Myth’
	Chapter Two
97	‘C.S. Lewis, Ernst Cassirer and Myth’
	Chapter Three
134	‘The Symbolic Form of Myth in <i>Perelandra</i> ’
	Chapter Four
168	‘The Symbolic Form of Myth in <i>Till We Have Faces</i> ’
	Chapter Five
208	‘The Symbolic Form of Myth in <i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i> ’
242	Conclusion
253	Glossary
257	Appendix
294	Bibliography

Introduction

An Overview of Myth Theoretics

This thesis seeks to present new insight into C.S. Lewis' (1898-1963) use of myth by providing readings of his works from the perspective of the myth theories of the German philosopher Ernst Cassirer. Cassirer (1874-1945) posited myth as a symbolic form. His theories draw upon the methods of the German phenomenologists of the 1920s who studied human consciousness. In contrast, Lewis was a Christian apologist, a literary critic, and is remembered for works as diverse as the satirical *The Screwtape Letters* and the children's stories *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Less well known is Lewis' *Cosmic Trilogy* in which pagan mythological deities such as Mars and Venus are brought into a Christian and cosmic mythological system that also includes Arthurian myth in the last book of the trilogy. Lewis also wrote the pseudo-historical novel *Till We Have Faces* which he acknowledged as a retelling of the Cupid and Psyche myth, previously told in the *Metamorphoses (The Golden Ass)* written by the Roman poet Lucius Apuleius Platonicus (born 125A.D.). It is apparent that any exploration of myth in Lewis through Cassirer's theories needs some broader contextualisation because these men developed their theories of myth from a diverse range of sources. They were both academics who read widely from many sources of myth, studying myth theories and debates from past eras as well as those current during their own era of the early 20th century. Thus initially we have to look at the theories on myth that may have influenced Lewis and Cassirer, and then follow myth theory after their deaths, in 1963 and 1945 respectively, in order to 'locate' their views within myth theory and to gain an awareness of current debate on myth. An overview of the fundamental influences on myth theory will contextualise Lewis and Cassirer's approaches in contrast to those of the various scholars, poets, philosophers, anthropologists, psychologists, sociologists and critics who have also considered the problem of myth. The first thing to consider is what is meant by 'myth'.

The very meaning of the word myth has changed from its origin as *mythos*. In Homer's *Iliad* (6:381-2) Hektor makes enquiries of a servant and her account is her *mythos*, there is thus a shift from this to the view of myth as artifice. The *O.E.D.* defines myth as generally being a fictional narrative having supernatural characters, actions or events and suggests that myth can embody popular notions of natural or historical phenomena. It is distinct from allegory or legend, which retain the implication of a factual nucleus. In my view, myth suggests a quality that is different from an ordinary story and hard to define because we cannot be certain that the experience of myth is the same for everyone. In some theories myth is considered as having emerged from primitive or archaic human thought yet it is also part of modern life. Myths seem to impart deeper meaning than 'ordinary' stories but can still be narrative in nature.

Myths have been created in many cultures in response to environment, the stars, nature and deity. The term mythology refers to a system of myths and from different cultures distinctive mythologies have emerged. Human virtues and vices have been personified in myths with God-like qualities mixed with human ones and, instead of the many lesser deities of pantheism, we have in Christian myth the angelic orders and one God Incarnated as a man called Christ. Every human culture of man has its mythology. The Welsh have *The Mabinogion*, and the Irish the Knights of the Red Branch, and the sagas of Cuchullin. English myth has been variously affected by a host of influences including Celtic and Anglo-Saxon myth as well as druidic tree lore mysticism and, following the conquest, French and Southern European influences. However, Western myth is also the product of Greek and Roman mythologies that were themselves, still further back in time, often influenced by myths from the Near and Far East. Mythographers can draw upon source material as diverse as the Egyptian *Pyramid Texts*, the Indian *Mahâbhârata*, the *Vedas*, the Persian *Avesta*, Mesopotamian *Gilgamesh*, Babylonian *Enuma Elish*, Aztec and American Indian myths, the Norse *Eddas*, the Finnish *Kalevala*, Hesiod's *Theogony*, Homer's poems, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* among many other contributions to a vast world heritage of myth. With this vast scope in mind, it is clear that discussion of myth is problematic because there is no certain way to confirm the specific origins of the original sources and influences of many myths and mythologies. Myth commentators, for example, have indicated that it is impossible to be sure just how much the figure of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of

Christ, may owe to ancient myths of the Great Mother goddess Isis.¹ Isis emerges in myths from long before the time of Christ in Roman, Greek, Egyptian and Indian sources, amongst a multitude of other ancient cultures.

The theories and criticism of myth have themselves been as complex and problematic as any mythic construction. Myths have been considered as history, allegory and, through the approaches of natural allegory and comparative mythology, ritual, psychoanalysis, and structuralism.² The early philosophers' views on myth are difficult to identify with certainty however the presocratic thinker Xenophanes (c. 500B.C.) dismissed the need for the gods to be in the shape of men, proposing a sphere as a more conducive shape for divinity. He also rejected the notion of *theo-gonies*, or the birth of gods and attacked the all too human morality evident in the gods portrayed in the works of Homer and Hesiod. Theagenes of Rhegion (c. 525B.C.) defended myth in Homer, proposing it should be considered allegorically rather than literally, and moral allegory has been attributed to Anaxagoras' (c. 550B.C.) view of myth in Homer. Empedokles (c. 550B.C.) equated the four elements to the gods Zeus, Hera, Aidoneus and Nestis, whilst love and strife he suggested as principles. Hekataios of Miletos observed that the retelling of myths over time has corrupted them, whilst many 'history' writers of the ancient Greek world have been identified as actually to some degree engaged in writing myths.³ Euhemerus (c. 330-260B.C.) was a Greek philosopher whose approach to myth, 'euhemerization', sees the gods as historic personages, heroes or great kings. Thus the gods are derived, for Euhemerus, through building upon traditions about real people in history.

One of the greatest thinkers who wrote about myth in ancient times was Plato (c. 427-347B.C.). Plato's dialogue *Phaedrus* sees Socrates reject explanation of mythical beasts such as 'centaurs and chimeras dire. Gorgons and winged steeds' (Pato, 1993, p47) in favour of first attempting the philosopher's goal to 'know myself' (Pato, 1993, p47). Though generally known for literary study, C.S. Lewis also studied the works of Plato and taught platonic philosophy, amongst other philosophies, at Oxford University in 1926.⁴ In 1961 he assessed Plato as 'an overwhelming theological genius' (Lewis, 1977f, p69) and among the religious writers 'on whom I could really feed' (Lewis, 1977e, p171). When Lewis once referred to philosophy as a subject his friend Owen Barfield pointed out that philosophy 'wasn't a *subject* to Plato ... it was a way'

(Barfield cited in Lewis, 1977e, p180). Whilst Plato condemned poets such as Hesiod and Homer (see *The Republic* 377a) for their handling of myth he goes on to construct myths of his own. Commenting on various creation myths in Norse, Greek, Babylonian and Egyptian mythologies, Lewis commented that Plato makes ‘an amazing leap’ (Lewis, 1977f, p69) beyond ‘ordinary Pagan religion’ (Lewis, 1977f, p69) because for Plato ‘the whole universe - the very conditions of time and space under which it exists - are produced by the will of a perfect, timeless, unconditioned God who is above and outside all that He makes’ (Lewis, 1977f, p69). For Lewis this is not simply another creation myth but a shift in emphasis that ‘changes a man’s whole mind and imagination’ (Lewis, 1977f, p69).

Similarly Lewis thought that Plato’s description of the death of Socrates demonstrated goodness destroyed by the wickedness of the world, and thus he considered this to be Plato’s attempt to ‘depict something extremely like the Passion of Christ’ (Lewis, 1977f, p88). Thus for Lewis ‘There is a real connection between what Plato and the myth-makers most deeply were and meant and what I believe to be the truth’ (Lewis, 1977f, p90). Lewis considered them to be discussing a truth that really refers to the great Christian truth of Christ’s sacrifice. Some Christians, therefore recognise a ‘resemblance of Adonis to Christ’ (Lewis, 1977f, p89) that is merely a counterfeit of Christ’s real sacrifice, whilst for Lewis and Christians who think similarly, ‘in mythology divine and diabolical and human elements (the desire for a good story), all play a part’ (Lewis, 1977f, p89). Thus myths of seasonal death and rebirth and the Pagan gods who are sacrificed to ensure the new harvest demonstrate that ‘The resemblance between these myths and the Christian truth is no more accidental than the resemblance between the sun and the sun’s reflection in a pond’ (Lewis, 1977f, p90).

Lewis’ views changed over his life and this is reflected in his writings (see next chapter of this thesis), his comments on Plato in *Christian Reflections* (1961) are indicative of his mature thought. His theory of pagan dying and reviving god myths is very much a theory imposed by a Christian apologist upon a pagan philosopher. Plato is more generally acknowledged for his attack on myth, especially for his dismissive interpretations of the gods in myths written by the ancient pagan poets, ‘there is no redeeming feature to the lies which Hesiod repeats, about Uranus’ deeds and Cronus’

revenge on Uranus' (Plato, *Republic*, 377e-378a, 1998, p72). Zeus' lusts lead him to ignore the battle for Troy in *The Iliad* and all too often petty spitefulness leads to despicable acts being committed by the gods in works such as Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. This work recounts myths from such diverse sources as Greece, Italy and 'Babylon and the East' (Innes, 1967, p9). Poets portrayed the gods driven by the base desires of mortal emotions. Interpretation of myth veered from allegory, personification, a force for social control, a kind of logic and as tales based in some lost historical truth. In contrast to the notion of myths as lies we also have interpretations asserting that myths impart higher truths. Thus mysticism has also become ingrained in myth and its interpretation. After 5th Century Greek enlightenment mythology was approached as though its images 'must conceal a rational cognitive content' (Cassirer, 1955, p2). The Sophists engaged in this kind of myth interpretation and transposed myths into 'the conceptual language of popular philosophy' (Cassirer, 1955, p2). They perceived myth as a cloak for speculative, scientific or ethical truth. In contrast the Stoics and Neoplatonists returned to 'speculative-allegorical interpretation of myths, and through them this method was handed down to the Middle Ages and Renaissance' (Cassirer, 1955, p3). *The Divine Comedy*, written by Dante Alighieri in the early 14th century, saw classical mythological beings sharing the *Inferno* with Dante's contemporaries. Lewis noted the pervading influence of myth, observing that 'From the twelfth to the seventeenth century Europe seems to have taken an unfailing delight in classical mythology' (Lewis, 1945a, p43). *The Wisdom of the Ancients* (1619) saw Francis Bacon looking for truths in myth. Meletinsky observes that in the Renaissance myth was considered as 'a series of poetic allegories tinted by a moralising veneer' (Meletinsky, 2000, p3) and thus myth retained an association with truth, albeit a hidden truth.⁵ However a negativity towards myth emerged in the Enlightenment. In *Scienza Nuova* (1725-44) Giambattista Vico proposed a theory of myth that 'does away with the opinion of the matchless wisdom of the ancients, so ardently sought after from Plato to Bacon' (Vico, 1948, *The New Science*, para. 387). Instead he suggested that early man was childlike and the creator of poetic characters and gods, 'Their poetry was at first divine, because they imagined the causes of things they felt and wondered at to be gods' (Vico, 1948, para. 375).

Whilst it is hard to feel completely satisfied by any particular explanation of myth, due to myth's ineffable character, the allure of myth is perhaps most acutely felt on occasions when people become 'disconnected' from their mythologies. Thus when a people lose the mythology that was central to their culture, then a sense of myth's absence takes hold. J.R.R. Tolkien felt his study of *Beowulf* lessened because 'we may regret that we do not know more about pre-Christian English mythology' (Tolkien, 1997, p24). The Icelanders' jubilation on the return of the Codex Regius, 'the manuscript in which the *Poetic Edda* is preserved' (Larrington, 1996, pxi), can be attributed to the feeling the Icelanders had for their mythology (see Larrington, 1996, pxii). Aesthetic movements such as the pre-raphaelites have returned to myth, sensing something important to have been lost when it is absent; and the need for myth to fill a void was noted by Friedrich Schlegel in his *Dialogue on Poetry* (1800). Schlegel maintained that 'The essential shortcomings of modern poetry in relation to that of antiquity may be summed up in these words: we have no mythology' (Schlegel, 1991, p197). Schlegel's comments of 1800 recognise a deficiency that he thought could be rectified either by acquiring a mythology or collaborating in order to produce one. Schlegel contended that the new mythological infusion would emerge very differently to that of the old. He described the mythology of antiquity as 'the first blossoming of the youthful imagination, clinging directly to – and rooting itself in - what was most immediate and alive in the sensuous world' (Schlegel, 1991, p197). He felt that the new mythology must 'be fashioned out of the profoundest depths of the spirit' (Schlegel, 1991, p197) and he identified the artist's need for myth whilst criticising works without it as shallow and superficial. Whilst mythology is wrought from the deepest inner spirit of mankind it is also a very artificial form and Schlegel saw the power and the operation of mythology as a renewing force for the poetry of the early 1800's.

By the mid-19th century social anthropologists were recording myths from ancient cultures. The Victorian systemisation of mythology was beginning to reveal new notions of a philosophy of mythology itself. Different schools of myth study began to emerge and the various researches came into conflict. Hegel, Herder, Spengler and Toynbee followed myth in philosophies of history and their work in this area lent itself to Nazi myth appropriation. Myth in the context of history succumbs to nationalist purposes. A similar sentiment had been proposed by Plato in *The Republic* and by

Aristotle in *Metaphysics* (Bk. XI:8). In contrast Friedrich and Wilhelm Schlegel, Georg Creuzer and Johann Görres, amongst others, explored the aesthetic appreciation of myth, adopting a Romantic approach. A greater anthropological emphasis emerged in the works of E.B. Tylor and Andrew Lang.⁶ Lang was opposed to Max Müller's school of myth theory. Müller's views on myth emerged most fully in 'Comparative Mythology' (1856) where he suggested that myth denigrated language. From the awe early man sensed about his environment abstract qualities became mythologised and, later, as language changed over time so myth and meaning became dissociated. Müller proposed comparative philology as a way to reconstruct lost meanings.

In *Custom and Myth* (1884) and *Myth, Ritual and Religion* (1899) Lang anticipated some of the work of James Frazer. The early anthropological views tended to see myth as not necessarily illogical. The role of myth in terms of its social importance emerged in the considerations of Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942) in *Myth in Primitive Psychology* (1926).⁷ The school of sociological myth theory included Emile Durkheim who went on to influence both Claude Lévi-Strauss and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl. However, prominent in the Ritual School of myth theory was the work of Jane Harrison (1850-1928) who examined the ritual forms found in Greek myths, notably in *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (1903), *Themis* (1912), *Ancient Art and Ritual* (1913) and *Epilegomena* (1921). A new insight into collective ritualism began to emerge. However, the most significant influence on Harrison and the Ritual School was James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*. Whilst Frazer's seasonal myth studies are viewed as originating the Ritual School's approach this remains contentious because of Robertson Smith's work on sacrifice in *The Religion of the Semites* (1889) which may have influenced Frazer. *The Golden Bough* was first published in twelve volumes and reached a substantial audience of non-anthropologists particularly after 1922 when an abridged version became available. In this immense work Frazer countered the Aryanist comparative mythology of Max Müller and his followers. *The Golden Bough* chronicles a vast collection of myths, rituals, superstitions and customs of primitive peoples and it was an important milestone because it helped to define the anthropological discourse. *The Golden Bough* was criticised methodologically for being based on associationist psychology held to be 'thirty years out of date' (Stocking, 1996, pxxiii) and for causing people to review the premise on which traditional Christianity was based, 'the Easter

rites still observed in Greece, Sicily, and southern Italy bear in some respects a striking resemblance to the rites of Adonis' (Frazer, 1996, p433). For Frazer various dates and Christian customs, such as Christmas, are viewed as having origins in pagan beliefs. Easter for example may have been 'adapted to a similar celebration of the Phrygian god Attis at the vernal equinox' (Frazer, 1996, p434). He noted that 'Christians and pagans alike were struck by the remarkable coincidence between the death and resurrection of their respective deities' (Frazer, 1996, p434). It is perhaps not surprising that Frazer's work was viewed as 'the most devastating attack anyone had made on Christianity since William Godwin' (see Hyman, 1966, pp. 253-4). With its chronicling of unusual and barbaric beliefs *The Golden Bough* was also seen as exotic and titillating, contrasting the superiority of the Imperial British with the child-like quality of savages unable to rationalise the world around them except with totemistic superstitions. Marett observed that readers could be 'reassured by the knowledge that rational understanding had overcome the primitive irrationalities of myth, magic, superstition and taboo' (Marett, 1920, p173).

For many writers, poets, psychologists and theorists living and working in the early 20th Century myth was interwoven throughout their works or became fundamental to the development of their ideas. This is evident whether the works are modernist or, as with C. S. Lewis, works which oppose modernist 'zeitgeist' in favour of restoring Romanticism. The use of myth at this time can be seen as a key component in an explosion of artistic endeavour which spanned and encompassed movements as diverse as the art of Pablo Picasso, who metamorphosed the bullfight into the myth of the Minotaur, to the writings of Saul Bellow who used myth ironically to contrast his urban protagonist Augie March with the high-brow nobility of mythological heroes. A great diversity and prodigious heterogeneity of myth in all forms of art emerged during this period, suggesting that a vitality and urgency had emerged in the need for myth.

Authors, poets and artists began to experiment with myths as never before. Drawing upon myths from Frazer's *Golden Bough*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Jesse Weston's book on the Grail legend entitled *From Ritual to Romance* (1920), T. S. Eliot wove myths in to his seminal poetic work *The Waste Land* (1922). This poem offered a radically new treatment of myth, creating in the process a new poetic idiom. Eliot fragmented and interspersed one myth with another, building a cacophony of sundered

belief systems and fractured archetypal imagery that evokes a confusion of meaning. For Eliot there are two main ways of reading *The Golden Bough*, 'as a collection of entertaining myths, or as a revelation of that vanished mind of which our mind is a continuation' (Eliot, 1921, p453). The restoration of myth in art implies satiating an inward, spiritual lack. Eliot was a journalist reporting from France during World War I and *The Wasteland* evokes similar scenes of desolation. To fragment and convolute myth implies the breakdown and disorder of the mind and recalls the lamenting cry of the 3rd century B.C. Roman poet and philosopher Lucretius when the myths of classical Greece failed and there were 'aching hearts in every home, racked incessantly by pangs the mind was powerless to assuage and forced to vent themselves in recalcitrant repining' (Lucretius, VI:1-23, 1978, p217).

In a lecture on W. B. Yeats Eliot suggested that Yeats' work demonstrated *external* and *internal* approaches to myth. The external way emerged in early works of Yeats where 'characters are treated, with the respect that we pay to legend, as creatures of a different world from ours' (Eliot in Murray, 1991, p200). However for Eliot later works by Yeats demonstrate a change of emphasis in his use of myth. Mythical characters, such as Cuchulain, are simultaneously universal men and women. Eliot regarded James Joyce's *Ulysses* as exhibiting the internal way of handling myth. This was, Eliot contended, achieved through 'a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity' (Eliot, 1964, p679-81). For Eliot the 'mythical method' was 'a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history' (Eliot, 1964, pp. 679-81). The mythical method had repercussions for art in the 20th century with the creation of new approaches towards order and form. It became a 'conscious, secret discipline' (Murray, 1991, p202) which observed the parallel between the objective world of inherited myth and the world of the artist's own inner subjective experience.

C.S. Lewis saw the modernist style of Eliot's poetry as an attack on traditional English poetry. He attacked Eliot's views on criticism as unscholarly, see Lewis' *Preface to Paradise Lost* (1942). In 'Shelley, Dryden and Mr Eliot' (1939) Lewis criticised Eliot's views on Dryden, (see Eliot, T.S., 1932, *Selected Essays*). Lewis disliked the vulgarity of Dryden and maintained that Shelley is 'superior to Dryden by the greatness of his subjects and his moral elevation ... (and in) his disciplined

production not just of poetry but of the poetry in each case proper to the theme and the species of composition' (Lewis, 1969, p194). In Lewis' advocacy of Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* he recognised that the

theme is one of sane, public, and perennial interest - that of rebirth, regeneration, the new cycle. Like all great myths its primary appeal to the will and the understanding can therefore be diversely interpreted according as the reader is a Christian, a politician, a psycho-analyst, or what not. Myth is thus like manna; it is to each man a different dish and to each the dish he needs (Lewis, 1969, p205).

The image of myth as a 'dish' is an interesting choice since 'tasting' is later used to describe Lewis' notion of receiving myth in his essay 'Myth Became Fact' (1944). In Lewis' thoughts on Shelley, he proposed that myth

does not grow old nor stick at frontiers racial, sexual, or philosophic; and even from the same man at the same moment it can elicit different responses at different levels. But great myth is rare in a reflective age; the temptation to allegorize, to thrust into the story the conscious doctrines of the poet, there to fight it out as best they can with the inherent tendency of the fable, is usually too strong (Lewis, 1969, p205).

Whilst the 'great mythical poems of modern times - have in this way been partially spoiled' (Lewis, 1969, p205), he was thinking particularly of examples such as the *Niblung's Ring*, Lewis felt that Shelley had found a way to avoid such reduction 'He has found what is, for him, the one perfect story and re-made it so well that the ancient version now seems merely embrionic' (Lewis, 1969, p205).

Like Eliot, another contemporary of Lewis was Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). Freud pioneered the analysis of the subconscious, hidden drives through mythological analogy. 'Psychoanalysis', the name Freud attributed to the discipline, was derived from the myth of Cupid and Psyche. Myth for Freud, when interpreted and applied to the human mind, expresses unconscious drives and desires. In *Totem and Taboo* (1913) Freud claimed that psychoanalysis

cannot accept as the first impulse to the construction of myths a theoretical craving for finding an explanation of natural phenomena or for accounting for cult observances and usages which have become unintelligible. It looks for that

impulse in the same psychical “complexes” in the same emotional trends which it has discovered at the base of dreams and symptoms (Freud, 1913, p185).

In *Ancient Myth in Modern Poetry* (1971) Lilian Feder explores psychological, political and identity orientated approaches to myth, suggesting that the key to understanding Freud’s approach is

his discovery of the connection between myth and dream, and his effort “to transform *metaphysics* into *metapsychology*”. In the exploits of the gods and heroes of ancient Greek and Latin literature Freud saw expressions of instinctual drives and unconscious conflict (Feder, 1971, p9).

Laurence Coupe suggests that Freud, like Frazer, is a ‘Euhemerist. For the one (Frazer), the God was originally a king or magician, or at any rate a personage crucial to the well being of the tribe. For the other (Freud), the God was the primal father deified’ (Coupe, 1997, p126). Frazer concentrated his collection of myth on religious aspects and the cycle of vegetation and the ideas of primitive people who believed in the myth of sacrificing a god to replenish crops the following year. For Freud the murder of a God, or a father, became the basis for his theories of sex and repression. Freud explored Sophocles’ Athenian drama *Oedipus Rex* in the light of repressed desire and the child/infant’s wish to displace the father in the mother’s affections. Similarly the mythical Sphinx can be read as the return of a repressed mother figure. He applied his techniques of psychoanalytic criticism to *Hamlet* and also to the biblical story of Moses. *Totem and Taboo* sees Freud develop the notion of ‘the primal horde’ who attack the patriarchal dominance of the tribal leader, the father. In this work Freud suggests the horde are all sons of the father who rebel against his appropriation of all the women. They attack and cannibalistically devour him and take the females of the horde, their sisters, for themselves. This act mirrors the Frazerian totemic rite in which the horde’s action of devouring the father allow them to acquire a portion of his strength (see Freud, 1985, p203) and so, Freud proposed, we can see the beginnings of social organisation, moral restriction and religion. Freud also applied his theory of the cannibalistic act of the primal horde to the biblical legend of Moses (see *Moses and Monotheism: Three Essays*, 1934-8) suggesting that the followers of Moses, having murdered him, become remorseful and turn to monotheism, Moses’ preferred religion, ‘They adopted Yahweh,

a local god, promoting him to the status of the one, universal God. Thus the Hebrew-Judaic faith became the religion of the father' (Coupe, 1997, p131).

In contrast to Freud's centrality of desire Carl Jung proposed a greater emphasis on the spirit, religion and faith in his theories of the unconscious. For Jung universal patterns of behaviour expressed in mythical forms are 'archetypes of the collective unconscious' (Jung, 1963, p79). The archetype has a numinous character and enters into opposition to the conscious mind, unconsciously influencing an individual's thinking, feeling and behaviour. Archetypes are viewed as gradually drawing nearer to consciousness until finally taking possession of it. Jung describes the collective unconscious as

a universal homogeneous substratum whose homogeneity extends into a world-wide identity or similarity of myths and fairy tales; so that a Negro of the Southern States of America dreams in the motives of Grecian mythology, and a Swiss grocer's apprentice repeats in his psychosis, the vision of an Egyptian Gnostic (Jung, 1946, p624).

Jung, in collaboration with Kerényi, proposed that the archetype is a psychic organ we all have in common and thus myths reveal something of the preconscious psyche, forming revelatory and involuntary statements about our unconscious psychic drives. Others extended the work of Freud and Jung, Otto Rank proposing theories of commonality regarding cultural heroes and Gods, whilst Kerényi continued to apply and elaborate Jungian method in his books on myth. Contributors to the psychological approach to myth also include Alfred Adler, Géza Róheim and Charles Baudoine.⁸ The influence of Jung has also emerged in the works of myth theorists Joseph Campbell and Mircea Eliade.⁹

C.S. Lewis' concern with the development of psychoanalysis is expressed in his essay 'Psychoanalysis and Literary Criticism' (1942). In Lewis' view Freud's psychoanalysis assumes givens, such as infantile sexual experience for all humans, and that latent thought utilises images. Such images then indicate the presence of latent thought in the unconscious. The assumption of the erotic character of such latent thought is too arbitrary to convince Lewis of the validity of such an approach. Whilst Freud argued that the image of the garden, for example, is 'only a disguise for the female body' (Lewis, 1969, p293) Lewis pointed out that such symbolism is hardly

unconscious in the case of the *Romance of the Rose* where readers 'start with a fully conscious attention to the erotic material and then deliberately express it in the symbols. The symbols do not conceal and are not intended to conceal: they exhibit' (Lewis, 1969, p295). This caused Lewis to ponder why humanity continues to freely adopt symbols, 'It becomes clear that humanity has some motive other than concealment' (Lewis, 1969, p295). The example of the *Romance of the Rose* also negates the Freudians' argument that denial of psychoanalytic methodology is because of inhibition. With an element of irony Lewis applied psychoanalysis to psychoanalysis itself, using this hyper-analysis to point out the flaws in both Freud and Jung's use of archetypal patterns. Lewis maintained that 'Jung's discussion of "primordial images" itself awakes a primordial image of the first water' (Lewis, 1969, p299). A similar power is exerted through the image aroused in Freudian analysis and so discussion of primordial images evokes such images and, for Lewis, this image evocation counters 'the wounds made by materialism' (Lewis, 1969, p299). It exerts an emotional power upon those who use it and who claim greater insight into the human mind. Thus Lewis questioned if Jung had

worked us into a state of mind in which almost anything, provided it was dim, remote, long buried, and mysterious, would seem (for the moment) an adequate explanation of the "leap in our blood" which responds to great myth? (Lewis, 1969, p299).¹⁰

Psychoanalysis became a dominant literary critical tool that was used extensively to study myth. Maud Bodkin for example observed the different archetypes of woman as mother, goddess and destroyer. Lewis found 'interesting critical expression' (Lewis, 1969, p296) in Jung's view of myth observed in Bodkin and E.M.W. Tillyard's approaches.¹¹ For Lewis the archetypal pattern is a self-evoking one and this remains the potent and appealing part of psychoanalysis. His central contention with the application of psychoanalysis to literature lay chiefly in the literary symbol's total subordination to Freudian desire. However psychoanalysis was not the only method of investigation exploring myth as a mental activity in the early 1900s. The problem generally arises that most techniques of myth analysis tend towards the reduction of myth in order that myth should fit a particular theory.

In Lewis' essay 'Religion Without Dogma' (1946) he proposed that 'Myths have been accepted as literally true ...(by the Stoics), as confused history (by Euhemerus), as

priestly lies (by the philosophers of the Enlightenment), as imitative agricultural ritual mistaken for propositions (in the days of Frazer)' (Lewis, 1996d, p91). Lewis considered that Euhemerus' or Frazer's view results 'If you start from a naturalistic philosophy ... But I am not a naturalist' (Lewis, 1996d, p91). Naturalism here pertains to a world-view devoid of the supernatural, or of spiritual meaning. Lewis recognised that from the

huge mass of mythology which has come down to us a good many different sources are mixed - true history, allegory, ritual, the human delight in story telling etc. (Lewis, 1996d, p91).

Lewis was not comfortable with theories that reduce myth to fit a particular theory. Instead of explaining away myth's supernatural quality he actively embraced the supernatural power of myth, seeing the essence of religion as co-existing with, among other things, mythology. Thus whilst not denying all the above as influences he also included 'the supernatural, both diabolical and divine' (Lewis, 1996d, p91) as a key source of myth. Thus Lewis' myth theory posits something greater, more transcendent, in myth.

In the late 1920s Ernst Cassirer strove to develop a philosophy of Symbolic Forms, fundamental to which was a philosophical rationalisation of the workings of myth in human consciousness, see *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. 2, *Mythical Thought* (Berlin 1925, translated into English in 1955). Although Cassirer also studied myth and Nazi ideology in his later work *Myth of the State* (1946), his central contribution to myth rests on his treatment of myth as a symbolic form, a notion revised and summarised in his works *Language and Myth* (1946) and *An Essay on Man* (1944). Cassirer observed that the study of myth had been divided into a variety of analytical disciplines, each striving to finally explain myth to the detriment or negation of other approaches. These approaches included psychology, psychologism, mythical religious superstructure, primordial mythical heritage, nature mythology, storm and tempest mythology, astral mythology, myth into history and allegorical interpretation. However, above all these approaches there remains for Cassirer the 'mythical consciousness' (Cassirer, 1955, pxiv). Cassirer observed that myth was viewed by early 20th century philosophers as 'an independent configuration of man's *consciousness*' (Cassirer, 1955, p3). F.W. Schelling asserted his claim in *Einleitung in die Philosophie der Mythologie*

(1856) to the notion that the source of myth goes beyond ‘inventors, poets, and individuals in general’ (Cassirer, 1955, p6) and has as its ‘*subjectum agens*, or source, the human consciousness. For Schelling the mythological process is made up of ideas and mythology does not have an ‘objective existence *outside* of consciousness’ (Cassirer, 1955, p6).

Cassirer used phenomenology to analyse the mythic conceptions of reality and objectivity. Man is bombarded by the chaos of impressions and then forms a world-view, or even a cosmos, out of these impressions. The relation of ‘representation to object presupposes an independent, spontaneous act of consciousness’ (Cassirer, 1955, p29). The consciousness forms representations through intuition and pure thought. Through mythical thought Cassirer analysed spatial order, form, empirical reality and the differentiation involved in distinguishing empirical reality from the world of representation, or imagination. In mythical consciousness we are, Cassirer proposed, dealing with the world of pure forms. In Cassirer’s philosophy of mythical consciousness an identification of myth and object occurs and this possesses the consciousness but only for an instant. This contrasts with the dialectical movement of thought. Cassirer’s research into myth looks at such things as the magical aura associated with the names of the gods and the power that mythical thought attaches to a man’s image. Using phenomenological methodology Cassirer analysed mythical thought through the kind of myths and mythical associations that man has held in relation to time, space and number. He proposed that ‘Whereas scientific cognition seeks a synthesis of distinctly differentiated elements, mythical intuition ultimately brings about a *coincidence* of whatever elements it combines’ (Cassirer, 1955, p63). He noted that for mythical thinking there is an indivisible unity. In many myths the parts of a man, such as hair or nail-clippings, can be used to affect the whole man. Thus in mythical thinking a part can not only stand for the whole but can *be* the whole. For Cassirer understanding the structure of the totemic world-view is scarcely possible without this essential trait of mythical thought. Similarly alchemy and astrology are linked by their mythical thought processes. In magic possession can be gained through the mimetic representation of someone’s image. Thus myth ‘binds particulars together in the unity of an image, a mythical figure’ (Cassirer, 1955, p69). In Cassirer’s approach there is an emotional immediacy inherent in myth, but, most importantly, Cassirer’s is a

symbolic theory that tries to avoid the reduction of other approaches. He is recognised by Meletinsky as ‘proposing a true system, a complex philosophy of myth that is unique in its kind’ (Meletinsky, 2000, p36). Philip Wheelwright, Wilbur Urban, Earl Count and Suzanne Langer also emphasise a symbolic view of myth in their work,¹² Langer going on to make comparisons between myth and music in *Philosophy in a New Key* (1951).

In analysing key influences upon myth theoretics in the 20th century approaches to the subject are clearly divided between its treatment as mysticism and the attempts to rationalise it logically. Anthropologists and psychologists sought to apply a scientific rationalism to myth even though myths are often drawn from the most profoundly irrational beliefs of primitive man. For writers and poets myth can be a way to reach a new understanding of human spiritual life through a re-mythification or as a connection to an ancient type of consciousness.

Robert Graves’ work on myth has been diverse, including *The Greek Myths* (1955) in 2 volumes in which he systematises the Greek myths and notes their social and cultural importance. His work with Raphael, *The Hebrew Myths* (1964), analyses the Old Testament and the myth of Eden. In *The White Goddess* (1948) Graves attempted an ‘historical grammar of the language of poetic myth’ (Graves, 1961, p9). This work was Graves’ reaction to the view of the European schools and Universities that myths are ‘quaint relics of the nursery age of mankind’ (Graves, 1961, p10). Graves’ approach departed from the preferencing of scientific discipline, which tries to see things as they are, not as they appear, an approach he saw as rejecting opinions of which no account can be given. Graves remained sensible to mystical interpretation for his premise that,

the language of poetic myth anciently current in the Mediterranean and Northern Europe was a magical language bound up with popular religious ceremonies in honour of the Moon-goddess, or Muse, some of them dating from the Old Stone Age, and that this remains the language of true poetry – “true” in the nostalgic modern sense of “the unimprovable original, not a synthetic substitute” (Graves, 1961, p9).

For Graves worship of the Moon-Goddess inspired poetic myths. She ‘demanded that man should pay woman spiritual and sexual homage: what is called Platonic love’ (Graves, 1961, p11). Goddesses presided over all acts of generation, whether physical,

spiritual or intellectual. Tree-lore and seasonal observation of life in the fields are fundamental to Graves' mythological study. He felt that the purpose of poetry was to invoke the Muse, the Moon-goddess, who presides over the earth keeping the natural order which man would usurp by following doctrines of modern 'civilisation'. C.S. Lewis also rejected the modern world's diminishment of the mythical imagination, proposing that the space race to the moon meant

The immemorial Moon - the Moon of the myths, the poets, the lovers - will have been taken from us for ever. Part of our mind, a huge mass of our emotional wealth, will have gone. Artemis, Diana, the silver planet belonged in that fashion to all humanity : he who first reaches it steals something from us all (Lewis, 1991, p215).

Lewis wasn't alone in mourning the loss of the mythical and sacral worldview. He was part of the Oxford literary group called 'The Inklings' that included, amongst others, J.R.R. Tolkien, an Oxford professor of Anglo-Saxon who became famous as the author of *The Lord of the Rings*, Charles Williams, an editor for Oxford University Press and author of theological fantasies set in contemporary Earth, and Owen Barfield, who was both a writer and a philosopher. Each of these men took a keen interest in myth and contributed various ideas to the debate concerning myth, literature, religion and philosophy among their many and varied writings. They were particularly keen to understand the relationship between myth and religious thought. For Barfield in *Poetic Diction* (1927) myth is a

ubiquitous phenomenon... intimately bound up with the early history of meaning. It is the same for innumerable words; if one traces them back far enough, one reaches a period at which their meanings had a mythical content (Barfield, 1951, p89).

Barfield opposed the view of the philologist Max Müller who advocated the notion of a 'metaphorical period' (Barfield, 1951, p84) in which language was saturated with poetic values. To explore the connection of myth with metaphor and meaning Müller was 'obliged to characterise the myth as a kind of *disease* of language' (Barfield, 1951, p89 on Müller, M., (1875) *Lectures on the Science of Language*, Scribner Armstrong & Co., pp. 372-376), a phrase Müller denied using. Barfield proposed instead that at the time of the dawn of language there was no distinction between the 'literal' and the

‘metaphorical’, instead words were used in a more ‘mythological’ way. Inklings biographer Humphrey Carpenter notes that German philosopher ‘Ernst Cassirer had said much the same thing independently. But it was said with particular force by Barfield’ (Carpenter, 1997, p42). Tolkien and Lewis were profoundly influenced by Barfield’s theory, finding their fundamental concepts of language altered forever after reading Barfield’s thesis¹³ *Poetic Diction* (1927). Tolkien ironically inverted the phrase associated with Müller declaring that languages ‘are a disease of mythology’ (Tolkien, 1947, p50).

As already mentioned, Lewis’ views on myth changed dramatically over the course of his life and writings (see following chapter for a more detailed analysis), but his views on myth undoubtedly changed the most dramatically because of his religious conversion. During 1916, a time when Lewis was a young, emergent, atheistic academic, he wrote to his childhood friend Arthur Greeves commenting that,

All religions, that is, all mythologies to give them their proper name are merely man’s own invention - Christ as much as Loki ... Thus religion, that is to say mythology grew up. Often, too, great men were regarded as gods after their death - such as Heracles or Odin: thus after the death of a Hebrew philosopher Yeshua (whose name we have corrupted into Jesus) he became regarded as a god, a cult sprang up, which was afterwards connected with the ancient Hebrew Jahweh-worship, and so Christianity came into being - one mythology among many (Lewis, 1979b, p135).

This view radically changed after Lewis came to faith in God and, later, to a belief in Christ. For example in his essay ‘Myth Became Fact’ (1944) he states his belief in Christ and suggested that the story of Christ’s Incarnation is both a myth and simultaneously also a fact. Lewis now proposed that myth can provide ‘spiritual sustenance’ (Lewis, 1944a, p44). Although he had always enjoyed myths before his conversion he now maintained that the ancient pagan myths of dying and reviving gods are divine hinting in poetic form of the story of Christ, a kind of cosmic echo or reverberation of the glory of God Incarnated in man.¹⁴ Thus, he felt, myth should be acknowledged as having a sacramental importance. Lewis had come to this view through his debates with the Inklings and particularly with Tolkien.

One of those early debates occurred in 1931 when Lewis argued with Tolkien that myths, however beautiful, moving or delightful, are ultimately ‘lies and therefore worthless, even though breathed through silver’ (Lewis in Carpenter, 1997, p43). Tolkien hotly refuted this, pointing out that myths were written by people whose worldview saw the sky as a jewelled tent, the earth as a womb, in fact everything in their world was alive with mythological beings, the whole of creation was ‘myth-woven and elf-patterned’ (Tolkien from his poem ‘Mythopoeia’, see also Carpenter, 1997, p43 and p268). For Tolkien man was not, ultimately, a liar but was rather a creation of God from whom he drew his ideals. Tolkien’s argument was that abstract and imaginative invention originate with God. For Tolkien the mythopoeic poet is thus a sub-creator since God is the primary creator. Mythmaking, or mythopoeia, fulfils God’s purpose and thus reflects a fragmented form of his own divinity. Thus for Tolkien, as Carpenter observes, ‘Pagan myths are therefore never just “lies”: there is always something of the truth in them’ (Carpenter, 1997, p43). After his talk with Tolkien¹⁵ Lewis went on to accept the idea of the Incarnation as both historical fact and myth. Despite Lewis’ conversion to Christianity his agreeing with the ‘myth became fact’ debate aligned him, on this issue, with anthroposophists such as Rudolf Steiner who had already accepted this concept. However Lewis rejected anthroposophy because of its occult associations. Works such as *Christian Mythmakers* (1998) by Rolland Hein place Lewis in the tradition of writers like Bunyan, MacDonald and Tolkien as a kind of religious sub-genre of the romantic aesthetic movement as distinct from the more occult paganisms of Yeats’ mythological work. It is my contention that the real contribution of Lewis to myth studies has yet to be fully realised and that this study will, in some measure, attempt to redress this balance.

The Inklings’ central contribution to the theoretics of myth was to view it as a system that has properties over and above those of its parts and their organisation, to see myths as structured systems yielding a holistic power. Lewis’ comments on myth in Preface to *George MacDonald: an Anthology* (1946); ‘On Stories’ (1947); and ‘On Myth’ in *An Experiment in Criticism* (1961) reveal that he desired the experience myth can impart. My expansion on the holistic power of myth forms the body of this thesis and is demonstrated by the practical application of Cassirer’s ideas to Lewis’ fiction in several test cases.

Since, for Lewis, myth has an extra-literary quality, holistic power or state, his approach to myth was, in the mid-20th century, starkly in contrast to the methodologies of reductionism adopted by most other forms of myth analysis. We have observed in this introduction that Lewis was generally critical of approaches to myth adopted by psychology, history, et. al. and, in fact, any approach that seeks to explain myth by reducing it. However, even the above mentioned approaches to myth are perhaps not quite as reductive as some that were to rise in dominance after Lewis' death in 1963. Whilst Cassirer in Germany and the Inklings in England grappled with myth, it was in Russia that the early foundations of one of the most reductive myth analyses began to be formulated. Vladimir Propp was working on investigating myths as tales demonstrating specific types of form. Propp was a Russian intellectual working on devising systems of analysis and classification of Russian folk tales. He drew upon the work of A. N. Afanás'ev who, in 1855, had compiled a basic Russian folk tale collection, *Naródnye rússkie skázki*. Propp was to take a 'scientific' approach to analysing these tales. A key influence upon Propp's work was the scientific classification of folk tales within the Aarne-Thompson Index of folk tale types.¹⁶ While the index was being translated methodological advances in structural analysis of literary works were being forged by the West European formalist school. Propp was able to break down the Russian folk tale into its component parts and thereby discover 'an amazing uniformity' (Propp, 1984, pxxv). Elements under Propp's investigation included the attitudes of the characters, how the tale undergoes transformation and 'investigation not only of the morphological, but also of the *logical* structure peculiar to the tale, which laid the groundwork for the study of the tale as myth' (Propp, 1984, pxxvi). Although Propp's seminal work was completed in 1928 it was 1958 before an English translation of his *Morphology of the Folktale* appeared. From 1958 onwards his work profoundly influenced folklorists, linguists, anthropologists and literary critics. Studies inspired or influenced by Propp's work include Lévi-Strauss in 1960, Dundes 1962 and 1964, Bremond 1964, Greimas 1966, Taylor 1964 and Fischer 1963.¹⁷

Several conclusions have emerged from this vast academic endeavour. Propp's was a 'linear sequential structural analysis' (Dundes, 1968, pxi), more commonly known as a syntagmatic approach since he followed the formal organisation of folkloristic text and the 'chronological order of the linear sequence of elements in the

text as reported from an informant' (Dundes, 1968, pxi). However, another type of structural analysis in folklore seeks to 'describe the pattern (usually placed upon an *a priori* binary principal of opposition) which allegedly underlies folkloristic text' (Dundes, 1968, p xi). In this method elements are removed from the given order and regrouped in different analytical schema. This departure from the sequential structural approach is generally known as paradigmatic. Claude Lévi-Strauss is renowned for championing the paradigmatic structural approach and so it is wrong to align his work with Propp's, although this is a common misconception. Dundes observes the differences between syntagmatic and paradigmatic approaches to structural analysis, concluding that the purely formalistic variety is

probably every bit as sterile as motif-hunting and word counting. In contrast, Lévi-Strauss has bravely attempted to relate the paradigm(s) he "finds" in myth to the world at large, that is to other aspects of culture such as cosmology and world view (Dundes, 1968, pxii).

Thus in this context Lévi-Strauss's method has led to the concept of myth and other forms of folklore as models.¹⁸ These depart from the previous Malinowski diachronic conceptions of myth as charter, set back in primeval time. The question arises as to whether the form of a myth must ultimately be related to the culture or cultures from which it derives.

Propp's lasting legacy to the study of myth is a set of numbered functions that cover each sequence of folktale, based upon the selection material used for his analysis. For example functions 12-14 represent the donor sequence and function 26 concerns the resolution of task. In function 27 the hero is recognised and function 28 sees the false hero or villain exposed. In function 30 the villain is punished and in function 31 the hero is married and ascends the throne. All these have sub-variations, but we can begin to realise the significance of such a table of functions through practical application. An example of this is found in the work of Dundes who identifies the *Odyssey* as being similar in the final sections to Propp's functions 23-31. He goes on to propose that Propp's functions can be applied to different cultures in order to analyse the structure of literary forms, comic strips, motion pictures and television plots because cultural patterns manifest themselves in a variety of cultural materials. Propp's *Morphology* has even been developed as a computer programme for analysing, calculating and re-

combining narrative motifs to identify a total number of theoretically possible combinations. The task of breaking down a myth or fairy story into its component elements in order to analyse their functional operation was for J.R.R. Tolkien a reductive process which carries the danger of,

people using the stories not as they were meant to be used, but as a quarry from which to dig evidence, or information, about matters in which they are interested. A perfectly legitimate procedure in itself - but ignorance or forgetfulness of the nature of a story (as a thing told in its entirety) has often led such inquirers into strange judgements (Tolkien, 1947, p47).

The 'strange judgements' that Tolkien observes can result from over emphasis being placed upon recurring similarities which then take on an apparently special significance. However the investigation of such elements poses, for Tolkien, the question 'what is the origin of language and of the mind' (Tolkien, 1947, p47). The exploration of the operation of language, evolving from the work of theoreticians such as Propp, has become known as structuralism.

Structuralism also emerged from the theoretical work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913).¹⁹ Saussure saw a distinction between 'langue' and 'parole', *langue* referring to the system of languages, rules and conventions which organise it and *parole* refers to the individual utterance. Storey points out that for structuralists 'meaning is always the result of an interplay of relationships of opposition and combination made possible by the underlying structure' (Storey, 1994, p101). This notion derives from Saussure's discovery that languages are composed of 'signs'. Signs have two component parts, 'signifier' and 'signified', where the former is an inscription and the latter a concept or mental image. Saussure proposed that an arbitrary relationship exists between signifier and signified. The imposition of language appears to construct and organise people's sense of reality, affecting their conceptualisation of the world. By examining language structuralists can study the texts and practices of culture. Semiology, the study of signs, was used by Roland Barthes in the 1950s to identify hidden agendas in popular culture. Barthes saw myth as creating a tri-dimensional pattern associated with the Saussurian semiological concept. He established that myth is built upon the semiological chain that existed before it and thus is a second-order semiological system. From this idea he proposed a lateral shift where the initial

grouping of signifier/signified = sign is, in turn, overlaid with the original sign becoming itself a signifier relating to another signified, therefore producing another sign. It is thus necessary to guard against signifiers which themselves are formed by a sum of signs. When looking for meaning in myth Barthes warns that one must be aware of primary and secondary semiological systems. For clarification Barthes calls the signifier that is the final term of the first system 'meaning', relating to the plane of language, whilst on the plane of myth he refers to the same term as 'form'. The name 'concept' refers to the signified. The third term of myth, which Barthes calls the 'signification', emerges because 'myth has in fact a double function: it points out and it notifies, it makes us understand something and it imposes it on us' (Barthes, 1994, p111). In Barthes' essay 'Myth Today' he offers three ways to look at how myth is received:

- 1) focus on an empty signifier
- 2) focus on a full signifier
- 3) focus on a mythical signifier

While the 'first two types of focusing are static, analytical; they destroy the myth' (Barthes, 1973, p139), the third type of focusing is 'dynamic, it consumes the myth according to the very ends built into its structure: the reader lives the myth as a story at once true and unreal' (Barthes, 1973, p139). There appears to be a resonance in Barthes' notion with Lewis' more sacral conception of 'enacting' a myth (see *Perelandra*, 1943, p185). To become a reader of myths, in the Barthian sense to explain how a mythical schema corresponds to the interests of a definite society, one must place oneself at the level of the third type of focusing. For Barthes it is the reader of myths who must reveal their essential function. This is a process of looking beyond the innocent consumption of myth, read as a factual system, and realising instead its nature as a semiological system, not as a system of facts. Of key importance in understanding Barthes' approach is the argument that

it is at the second level of signification that what he (Barthes) calls "myth" is produced and consumed. By myth Barthes means ideology understood as ideas and practices which defend the status quo - the "bourgeois norm" - and actively promote the interests and values of the dominant classes in society (Storey, 1994, p102).

Criticism has been levelled at Lewis for falling into this trap because his fantasy fiction promotes hierarchy and because he believed that man must accept his inferiority before God.²⁰ Whilst Lewis criticised ideological use of myth, see 'Funeral of a Great Myth' (1967) and 'Is Theology Poetry?' (1944), particularly in relation to what he called the Great Myth of popular evolutionism, his adoption of ancient myths and hierarchy in the *Cosmic Trilogy* and Narnia stories promotes order and a sense of claustrophobic enclosure within a cosmic hierarchical system. Danger and evil emerge in these stories when that order is threatened.

Barthes' essay 'Myth Today' forms the concluding section of his book *Mythologies* (1957) in which Barthes applies his theories to a range of concepts including film and culture. Fundamentally Barthes viewed myth as 'a system of communication... it is a message... it is a mode of signification, a form' (Barthes, 1973, p117). These ideas were developed by the anthropologist Lévi-Strauss who conducted research into the tribal myths of American Indians such as the Tsimshian Indians of the Northwest coast and the exotic tribes of South America. Lévi-Strauss attempted to prove that myths can be reduced into units which combine, like phonemes in language, to give meaning.²¹ Lévi-Strauss adopted structuralist techniques of analysis to study the structure of myth using binary oppositions.²² His methodology meant reducing the analysis of myth to the level of simple oppositions such as sky/earth, jaguar/man, land/water, nature/culture and patrilocal residence/matrilocal residence. He maintained that myths have underlying structures and that they communicate social beliefs and functions and ultimately resolve problems of native existence and life. His analytical work yields a precise symmetry when tabulated diagrammatically. Empirical categories are treated as conceptual tools forming abstract ideas. Jaguars and pigs etcetera are then considered like logical propositions in mathematical thought

Lévi-Strauss refers to 'Armature', 'Code' and 'Message' where the Armature comprises those elements that remain constant in a number of myths. The Code is the inter-relationship between the elements and the Message is the content of the elements. He regarded myth structures as having similarities to the structure of music and proposed that mythological structures have the potential to reveal the structure of cognitive categories. Lévi-Strauss' ideas draw very broadly 'on the structural analysis of linguistics, and on cybernetics and communication theory in general' (Douglas, 1968,

p49). Bringing these disciplines into focus on the analysis of tribal myth offers the possibility of units of language which could be inputted 'into a computing machine as surely and simply as if they were phonemes and morphemes' (Douglas, 1968, p50). An underlying pattern emerging from such an experiment may reveal the very cognitive process of the human mind. However debate continues as to whether Lévi-Strauss's work truly can be confirmed as revealing 'sentences'. Douglas argues that there is an inherent problem in

the reductionist tendency ... built into his (Lévi-Strauss's) type of myth analysis. He falls into the trap of claiming to discover the real underlying meanings of myths because he never separates the particular artistic structure of a particular set of myths from their general or purely formal structure. Just as knowing that the rhyme structure is a, b, b, a, does not tell us anything about the content of a sonnet, so the formal structure of a myth would not help very much in interpreting it (Douglas, 1968, p64).

Nevertheless myth as message can be broken down into code and undoubtedly lends itself to processes of systematisation. In *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) Northrop Frye identified 'four narrative pregenic elements of literature which I shall call *mythoi* or generic plots' (Frye, 1973, p162). Frye ambitiously proposed that myths, archetypes and genres form governing objective laws of literature. In the mythos of Spring he discerned a correspondence to Comedy, and likewise Summer corresponds to Romance, Autumn to Tragedy and Winter to Irony and Satire. Frye considered literature as 'an order of words' (Frye, 1973, p17) and thus proposed that a 'science' of critical technique is possible.²³ Laurence Coupe criticises Frye's model since different cultures 'form their own histories; and romance can appear after realism, as it has done in twentieth-century England, thanks to Tolkien, Lewis and others' (Coupe, 1997, p163).

A broad redefinition of myth is offered by Frye in *The Modern Century* (1967), in which he proposed that

In every age there is a structure of ideas, images, beliefs, assumptions, anxieties, and hopes which express the view of man's situation and destiny generally held at that time. I call this structure a mythology, and its units myths. A myth, in this sense, is an expression of man's concern about himself, about his place in the scheme of things, about his relation to society and God, about the ultimate

origins and ultimate fate, either of himself or of the human species generally. A mythology is thus a product of human concern, of our involvement with ourselves, and it always looks at the world from a man-centered point of view (Frye, 1967, p105).

Whilst primitive man had stories of gods with images realised physically, with 'more highly structured societies' (Frye, 1967, p105) myths can develop into literature, through a progression through folktales and legends, or myths can become 'conceptualized, and become the informing principles of historical and philosophical thought, as the myth of the fall becomes the informing idea of Gibbon's history of Rome' (Frye, 1967, pp. 105-6). In James C. Nohrnberg's review of Frye's writings 'The Master of the Myth of Literature: An Interpenetrative Ogdoad for Northrop Frye' (2001) Frye's notebooks, written as two groups of four, are considered along with his many ideas about myth. Among the theorists touched upon, Ernst Cassirer's ideas of phases in language and myth development are compared to progressions in Frye's theory of symbols (see Nohrnberg, 2001, p78). Nohrnberg rejects the notion of Malinowski's primitivist myth as the myth emergent in literature (Nohrnberg, 2001, p76). Nohrnberg also considers Frye as himself 'a kind of myth-maker, not just a cataloguer of myths made by others. But what was his myth? Our answer has been literature itself, that is, as monad' (Nohrnberg, 2001, p77).

In *Mythology in the Modern Novel* (1971) J.J. White analysed mythic structure in the 'mythological novel' and proposed that writers such as John Updike, who wrote *The Centaurs*, structure their works around a myth, or several myths, or use mythic reference to subvert myths by withholding a mythic pattern's natural conclusion. In my view White could have included C.S. Lewis' *Perelandra* (1943) because, although this work refers us to the pattern of the Eden myth, Lewis plays with readers' expectations that a Fall is inevitable for the people of Venus because it supposedly happened for man on Earth. Lewis re-opens the question of what the 'natural' conclusion of the Eden myth should be, because a sinless Adam and Eve in the paradise of another planet do not suffer the fall that is the conclusion to the terrestrial myth of Eden.

Four myth theorists, Ernst Cassirer, Paul Tillich, Mircea Eliade and Paul Ricoeur are explored in Marilyn C. Thie's article 'The "Broken" World of Myth: An Analysis' (1971). Thie attempts to gain insight into 'the "transition" of myth from its

primitive to modern roles' (Thie, 1971, p39). Through Cassirer's theories Thie suggests that 'The breaking out of myth by myth is a result of its relation toward its own image world which the mythical consciousness gradually comes to see as an inadequate, "outside" manifestation of its drive for expression' (Thie, 1971, p40). The religious consciousness emerges through 'the recognition of these images as images by consciousness' (Thie, 1971, p40), as well as through the resultant sense of closure and different form despite the inextricable interweaving of mythical and religious consciousness. From Tillich's work Thie observes that the 'radical criticism of myth by religion is due to the attempt of the primitive mythological consciousness to resist interpreting myth as myth, and to view myths only in their immediate meaning' (Thie, 1971, p42). The sense of religious awareness of myth recognised as myth 'but not removed or replaced, is called by Tillich a "broken myth"' (Thie, 1971, p42). Drawing on Eliade's work Thie suggests that 'it is mainly in the area of religion that its (myth's) function has remained most similar to the function of myth in primitive societies' (Thie, 1971, p44). From Eliade's (1952) *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, Thie notes that for Eliade "living" myth emerges in archaic societies, 'The discovery by depth-psychology of the survival of mythical themes as archetypes in the psyche of man regardless of race and historical surroundings has illustrated that the patterns of myth retain their point even for modern consciousness' (Thie, 1971, p45). Ricoeur recognises that myth has a "symbolic function," or its power of discovering and revealing the bond between man and what he considers sacred symbolically rather than literally' (Thie, 1971, p49). For Thie there is a sense of myth rejuvenating 'philosophy by bringing it into contact with symbols' (Thie, 1971, p52). The study of myth is an ever-growing area since popular culture has contributed to the development of new myths. Critics can observe the development of these new forms as Will Wright does in *Sixguns and Society* (1975) in which he analysed the structure of the Western film. Wright breaks down its elements in a similar fashion to Lévi-Strauss' investigation of South American Indian myths.

Ursula Le Guin's article 'Myth and Archetype in Science Fiction' (1976) attempts to explain the relationship between myth and rational understanding. Myths offer explanation for what is not yet understood whilst rational understanding developed through scientific advancement negates mythological pseudo-explanation, 'According

to this view, the advance of science is a progressive draining dry of the content of mythology' (Le Guin, 1989, p61). Le Guin's comment is not highly original, Cassirer having said much the same thing about myth and science some 50 years before.²⁴ This 'draining dry' is a schema that for Le Guin is reproduced in Freudian psychology and contrasts with approaches by Jung which maintain an emphasis on the irreducibility of symbol. Science fiction however appears to have a flexible and symbiotic relationship with myth. Plots can be modelled directly upon ancient myths, adapted and retold, operate symbiotically for the known and unknown or be appreciable as an aesthetic. Science fiction has also spawned its own cultural sub-myths, in a Jungian, 'collective' sense, which include mad scientists, supermen, all powerful computers and alien invaders. There seems to be an element of 'myth snobbery' in Le Guin's suggestions that these sub-myths of science fiction do not stand close scrutiny or connect as idea with value in the way that she claims happens with 'true myth' (Le Guin, 1989, p65). For Le Guin 'true myth' serves to connect the conscious to the unconscious realms. Thus myth can form a common ground through which writer and reader can recognise inner qualities in themselves, their dreams and nightmares. The artist forces readers to face the inexplicable within themselves and admit its common presence. Le Guin proposes various functions of myth:

- * The rational and explanatory
- * An expression of one of several ways the human being/body/psyche perceives, understands and relates to the world
- * Offering an insight as a mode of understanding when intellect alone fails to cope with sensual, emotional, appetitive, ethical needs, drives and satisfactions.

In the tradition of retelling and reinterpreting myths Elinor W. Gadon has radically re-read the myth of the minotaur by suggesting the creature's labyrinth dwelling represents the womb of the earth. Its death, Gadon maintains, suppresses the Minoan female-centred religion (see Gadon, 1989, p97-107). In her essay 'The Laugh of the Medusa' (1980) Hélène Cixous celebrates the female monster beheaded by Perseus as an 'emblem of bisexuality which evades sexual distinction and domination' (Coupe, 1997, p190). Generally feminist critics view the third of Campbell's mythological functions²⁵ as supporting patriarchal dominance and the status quo. *The Feminist*

Companion to Mythology (1992) collects together essays that refocus myth studies on areas of feminist interest, restoring a balance that editor Carolyn Larrington proposes has been lost by Campbell. Diverse myths are explored giving insight into questions of myth, reality, women, witches, goddesses and the relationship of myth to culture, female principles and feminist mythmaking. Whilst Marina Warner's works generally look at women and myth,²⁶ in contrast her *Managing Monsters: Six Myths of Our Time* (1994) considers the male hero myth. She recognises the appeal, especially for males, of video games in which the hero slaying monsters myth is strongly reaffirmed, but the emphasis is no longer so much on story instead 'the hero bursts his way through' (Warner, 1994, p18). The usual sense of structure associated with myth is thus called into question through the postmodern mix of modern technology, different pantheons, monster slaying myths and changing male roles. For Warner modern video game use of hero myths means that the old 'gleeful use of cunning and high spirits against brute force, a reliance on subterfuge have almost faded from heroic myth today' (Warner, 1994, p25) and in place of the trickster or hero living on his wits we now have the comic book hero or 'Clint Eastwood or Arnold Schwarzenegger movies ... the paradigm of the fittest survivor' (Warner, 1994, p25). The warnings of violence in Greek myths have been lost. The themes of technology, myth and the hero also emerge in Scott Stroud's analyses of the myth of the technological hero quest within the film *The Matrix*. Stroud uses Joseph Campbell's ideas of the hero quest myth, along with ideas from philosophy and narrative theory, and identifies the film as a myth of people disempowered by the technological community, {see Stroud, S.R., (Fall 2001) 'Technology and mythic narrative: The Matrix as Technological Hero-Quest' in *Western Journal of Communication*, v65 i4 p416(26)}.

The changing importance of myth for different eras may explain why the need for myth remained a dominant force in the approach to the new millennium. Rollo May, in *The Cry for Myth* (1991), charted the degradational effects experienced by African Americans through the loss of myth within their culture. He seeks to explain why myth is such an important element of human thought and consciousness. May, in agreement with Bruner, proposes that myths have significance both for human identity and as a link binding humanity to its past.²⁷ When these ties are broken a sense of rootlessness

and loss takes control and a vital quality essential to human well being is lost. May contends that when the myths of ancient Greece

were vital and strong, individuals in the society were able to meet the problems of existence without overwhelming anxiety or guilt feeling. Hence we find the philosophers in those times discussing beauty, truth, goodness, and courage as values in human life. The myths freed Plato and Aeschylus and Sophocles to create their great philosophic and literary works, which come down as treasures for us today (May, 1993, p16).

For May there is a sense that the 'common myths' (May, 1993, p46) of their society help Americans to order reality, and James Oliver Robertson considers myth as 'that which holds us all together' (Robertson cited in May, 1993, p46). May identifies a sense of loss and rootlessness in modern America firstly because slaves were forcibly brought from Africa, such as Alex Haley's ancestor, Kunta Kinte, who was abducted from Africa and sold into slavery in the American South; and secondly May recognises that people 'came as immigrants in the nineteenth century to escape starvation in the potato famine in Ireland, or the foreclosure of mortgages in Sweden, or the pogroms of Eastern Europe ...(and) courageously chose to leave their myths behind' (May, 1993, p48). Whether this severance from their myths is a result of choice or something forced upon them, May contends that many American descendants find themselves suffering 'an endemic feeling of loneliness, a prodding of restlessness' (May, 1993, p48). Thus for May 'We could define psychoanalysis as the search for one's own myth. How healing is such a myth to the person who can find and live with it!' (May, 1993, p49).

Kath Filmer-Davis' *Fantasy Fiction and Welsh Myth, Tales of Belonging* (1996) emphasises a slightly different type of mythic healing, this time in relation to children from dysfunctional families. With her emphasis on Welsh myth, Filmer-Davis' work explores cycles of myth, Arthurian novels, film heroes, Welsh mythology and myth and theological belonging. She culminates by drawing on C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien to link the notion of *Sehnsucht*, a sense of deep and inconsolable longing, with the fantasy of mythological other worlds. Filmer-Davies contends that Lewis 'realised that mythic power transcended the words in which it was expressed' (Filmer-Davies, 1996, pp. x-xi), and she asserts that in experiencing myth 'There is a dimension beyond our sense experience: something which we long to make tangible, but which remains like the

glimpse of something seen from the corner of the eye and which disappears when we turn our full gaze upon it' (Filmer-Davies, 1996, pxi). See also Filmer, 1988, 1993 and 1996 in Appendix.

Ned Lukacher's essay 'The Third Wound: Malcolm Bowie, Peter Brooks, and the Myth of Actaeon' (1996) chronicles how different readings of the myth of Actaeon have generated new meaning. The myth tells of Actaeon's glimpse of Diana during a hunt. The Goddess is disturbed in her bathing and transforms him into a stag, his hounds then turn upon their master and devour him. For Freud this myth connotes the threatened ego which '*is not master in its own house*' (Freud, 1953, 'Difficulty', p143). Malcolm Bowie assesses the Actaeon myth in the light of Freud and Jacques Lacan, who considered Actaeon with regard to the difficulties and resistance that psychoanalysis faces as a discipline. To psychologists the unconscious forces of thoughts and desires can consume the ego just as Actaeon, after being transformed by Diana into a stag, is eaten alive by his hounds. For Lacan the importance of this myth is encapsulated in how the myth comments upon the desire of the analyst. The emblematic Freud of Lacan is 'hounded by thoughts that are the death of thought, propelled by desires that would extinguish desire if allowed to run their course' (Bowie, 1987, p170). Thus the Actaeon myth can become a model for internalised conflict not only within a subject's battered ego but also as a parable for the fate of the analyst within a doubted profession who, for Lacan, becomes 'the prey of the dogs of his thought' (Lacan, 1977, p124). However in Lacan's argument there is the possibility of deflecting the terrible fate of Actaeon, since the analyst can stop the analytic situation and thus has the power that Actaeon was denied in that he is able to avoid the final auto-cannibalism. The theorist being eaten alive by his own theories is a notion taken up in the work of Klossowski's *Le Bain de Diane* (1956). Jean Paul Sartre's idea of the 'Actaeon complex' in *Being and Nothingness* (1956) 'literalizes the relation between knowledge and self-appropriation, *savoir* and *s'avoir*' (Lukacher, 1996, p69). Expanding horizons increase the risk of self-destruction. For Lukacher

The Actaeon myth provides a paradigm in which to think about the relation of the self and a not-self that includes at once the unconscious will and the resistant forces in the external world. Myth, theology, philosophy, art, and the discourses on art are all within the sphere of Actaeon's influence (Lukacher, 1996, p69).

The myth can be viewed as a paradigm for all theory-fiction and is able to transfer endlessly to associated discourses, which may be as varied as Hegel to Nietzsche, Heidegger and Derrida. There remains a relation between eating and understanding, absorbing knowledge and being assimilated or transformed by that knowledge, of both the 'process of the narcissistic self-constitution of the ego and of its inevitable dissolution' (Lukacher, 1996, p69). Lukacher also outlines various voyeuristic scenarios in art that focus on the nude Diana such as Titian's *Diana and Actaeon*. Questions arise about the object of Actaeon's desire perhaps being the central darkness of feminine genitalia. The various readings explored by Lukacher demonstrate the curious psychoanalytic afterlife with which the Actaeon myth has become endowed. Lukacher suggests that

within a life not necessarily orientated toward a higher purpose, the precepts and caprices of the gods be seen, not as the imperative ground of moral values, but as figures of the destructive power of human thought to torture itself (Lukacher, 1996, p72).

In *Myth* (1997) Laurence Coupe categorises his analysis in terms of reading myth (mythography) and mythic reading, the latter section being sub-divided into allegory, which Coupe identifies as 'realist', and typology which he identifies in its radical form as 'non-realist'. This leads to unusual classifications, 'Sigmund Freud, despite his debt to the Enlightenment ... will be regarded as a radical typologist' (Coupe, 1997, p94). Fundamentally Coupe's work explores myth in terms of chaos and order. He draws on examples as diverse as *Heart of Darkness*, *Apocalypse Now* and the music of Jim Morrison to establish how myth works in different media and has been received in religion, politics, literature, psychoanalysis and history. He also explores Myth, Nature and Chaos and demonstrates how paradigms are absorbed and developed in a continuing process of being recreated. Coupe's work supports the notion that myths are continually being re-applied, developed and fashioned to the needs of new generations.

Eleazer Meletinsky's *The Poetics of Myth* (1998) updates the censored Russian edition of his work of 1976. Meletinsky's approach to myth involves addressing the relationship of myth and literature. Like Lévi-Strauss he is looking for structure but Meletinsky seeks to avoid reductionism whilst also following the mytho-poetic base of

literary works. He affirms the emergence of formulas that rise beyond language, seeing these as involving ‘an artistic agenda, exemplars of linkages, and models of images and genres’ (Meletinsky, 2000, pviii). These provide the writer with a connection to a general setting, confirming the importance of myth as a form of thought and recognising a transcendental aspect to ideas.

Myth criticism and comment is as vital and flourishing today as in the times of Lewis and Cassirer. Modern approaches to myth reveal an incredible diversity including: paganism,²⁸ biblical myth, metaphysics and religion,²⁹ literature and classical studies,³⁰ history,³¹ politics,³² ritual,³³ art,³⁴ phenomenology,³⁵ philosophy,³⁶ deconstruction,³⁷ science,³⁸ anthropology,³⁹ psychology and psychologism,⁴⁰ gender and feminism,⁴¹ archive,⁴² iconization,⁴³ normative frames,⁴⁴ film, contemporary culture, modern myth,⁴⁵ and general interest.⁴⁶ Despite all this, not every myth commentator or theorist is mentioned in this introductory overview, which seeks only to identify the ever broadening approaches.

Myth theory remains an on-going debate. It can be further enriched through this re-appraisal of the significant contribution to the field made by C.S. Lewis. His writings remind us of myth’s sacramentalism, and the notion of a quality or power emerging from the holistic affect of myth upon a recipient. Clearly this identifies a deficiency in the field of myth studies which for far too long have been ever-narrowing in focus and ensnared in the occlusion of reductivism. Exploring the operation of the sacral symbolic form of myth can redress this balance and finally realise Lewis as one of the great myth theorists of all time.

Even within general myth criticism we can see that Lewis’ contribution has often been overlooked. Le Guin, for example, comments on science fiction and myth but doesn’t mention Lewis’ *Cosmic Trilogy* which should surely be acknowledged as seminal for myth within science fiction. Also whilst *The Poetics of Myth* particularly sets out to develop a theory of myth and literature, Meletinsky fails to mention either Lewis or the Inklings literary group. Whilst I have, so far, only broadly commented on Lewis, his contribution to the field of myth theoretics clearly requires closer study. This analysis will be developed and explored in subsequent chapters of this thesis. The neglect of this area may be because Lewis is not generally approached as an original

thinker on myth and symbol. Instead he is usually viewed as one of a group of literary mythopoeic writers, a reasonable enough approach in itself but not one designed to facilitate ideas from theorists external to the group.⁴⁷ Alternatively Lewis has been viewed as a religious apologist although his adherence to the supernatural, holistic and transcendent powers of myth has excluded him from debate within the more popular reductive schools of myth theory. Although Lewis is acknowledged in the Christian mythmaking tradition, it is my contention that his work on myth should also be brought more firmly in to the wider debate on myth for his contribution to myth and symbol as much as to Christianity. For Lewis, whilst approaches to myth such as psychoanalytic, euhemerist, naturalist, ritualist, archetypal, allegorical and the delight in story all manifest aspects of myth, none provides a completely satisfying account of it because some quality escapes explanation.⁴⁸ Thus he proposed that myth should be considered in a different way. Whilst Lewis' approach of sourcing myth in God could also be argued as a kind of reduction Lewis doesn't entirely reject the various other approaches. Instead he acknowledges each of them as describing an aspect of myth and as an attempt to explain the strange and inexpressible 'something' that myth imparts. Thus for Lewis a more transcendental power can emerge in myth and this makes discussion problematic without recourse to metaphysics. Cassirer's transcendental approach to myth offers a useful way of analysing myth in Lewis because Cassirer's philosophy embraced transcendentalism and metaphysics and sought to address the problems posed by the crisis of knowledge brought about by the compartmentalisation of different disciplines.

Before all this can take place, however, a closer study of myth in Lewis' works and thought is required. The need for a new analysis of Lewis and myth presents several problems. Firstly, Lewis' views of myth changed over the course of his life and intellectual development. Secondly, his views are not easily accessible in order to provide a clear developmental perspective since they are scattered through the canon of his life's writings, in letters, journal articles, book prefaces and chapters which are not necessarily focussed specifically on myth. Thirdly, a difficulty emerges because of the fragmented and changing nature of Lewis' thought. Lewis is often dismissed as contradictory. Whilst it is true that he has said contradictory things about myth (partly because of the inherent tensions within myth) it is wrong to reject his work on these grounds because his views on myth were generally tempered by experience, criticism

and debate and the insight that came with his study as a literary historian. All these factors brought Lewis into a closer engagement, understanding and sympathy with myth, thereby making a study of myth in Lewis more cogent and pertinent to the debate on myth as a whole. Fourthly, since Lewis was clearly mythopoeic, the identification of Lewis as a myth theorist is not one of the obvious identifications that immediately presents itself when thinking of this individual. Lewis' close friend Owen Barfield identified five different aspects of Lewis, proposing that he was a literary critic, fiction writer, broadcaster of apologetics, and an atheist and a theist in terms of his biography writing,⁴⁹ causing G.B. Tennyson to suggest that Lewis was a 'multifaceted figure' (Tennyson, 1999, pxiii). However Barfield's categories do not admit the suggestion of Lewis as an original myth theorist, an omission that my study intends to redress because, as the following chapter will demonstrate, myth underpinned all aspects of Lewis' thought.

Footnotes

- ¹ See Frazer, 1996, p461 (Book XLI).
Campbell compares the story of the Virgin Mary to Aphrodite as well as to ‘the Orphic mystery of Zeus ... begetting on his own daughter Persephone his incarnate son Dionysus’ (Campbell, Vol. 3, 2001, p28).
Solmsen, F., (1979) *Isis Among the Greeks and Romans*, Harvard University Press, provides insight into the extraordinarily diverse infiltration of the Mother Goddess into ancient cultures.
- ² Dowden, 1998, pp. 22-34.
- ³ For a more detailed analysis of the presocratic myth commentators see Dowden, K., (1998) *The Uses of Greek Mythology*, Routledge, pp. 39-53.
- ⁴ See Griffin, 1988, p44, and also Lewis’ letter to his father of 14th August 1925 and his comments on changing from philosophy to English (Lewis, 1993, pp. 212-213).
- ⁵ St. Augustine, in *De Civitas Dei* ii. 6., denied morality in pagan myths.
Boccacio, *De Genealogia Deorum*, xiv., claimed truths are hidden in myths.
- ⁶ Tylor, E.B., (1871) *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom*, J Murray, London.
Lang, A., (1887) *Myth, Ritual and Religion*, {revised version 1906} in 2 volumes, AMS Press.
Lang, A., (1898) *The Making of Religion*, London : Longmans, Green.
Lang, A., (1901) *Mifologija*, Moscow.
- ⁷ Malinowski based some of his theories on the study of the Trobriand islanders, noting the mythology surrounding marriage. See Malinowski, (1927) *Sex and Repression in Primitive Society*. His collected early essays can be accessed in *Magic, Science and Religion* (1948). His thoughts on myth, totem, dogma, and monogamy versus polygamy can be found in *Sex, Culture, and Myth* (1963).

Otto Rank (1914) *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*, Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Co., New York.

Otto Rank (1922) *Psychoanalytische Beiträge zur Mythenforschung*, Internationaler psychoanalytischer Verlag, Leipzig-Vienna.

Kerényi, K., (1946) *Prometheus: Das griechische Mythologon von des menschlichen Existens*, Rhein-verlag, zurich.

Kerényi, C., and Jung, C.G., (1949) *Essays on a Science of Mythology: The Myth of the Divine Child and the Mysteries of Eleusis*, New York: Pantheon Books.

Kerényi, C., (1967) *Eleusis: Archetypal Image of Mother and Daughter*, trans. Manheim, R., London : Routledge & K. Paul.

Kerényi, C., (1976) *Dionysos, Archetypal Image of Indestructible Life*, trans. Manheim, R., Princeton.

Alfred Adler broke away from Freud to concentrate on myth's social dimension according to May, 1993, p68-71, various comments on Adler can be found in May, R., (1993) *The Cry for Myth*, Souvenir Press.

Géza Róheim (1925) *Australian Totemism: A Psycho-analytic Study in Anthropology*, George Allen & Unwin, London.

Géza Róheim (1966) 'Myth and Folktale' in *Myth and Literature: Contemporary Theory and Practice*, Vickery, J., (Ed.) University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln; originally in *American Imago* II:266-279, (1941).

Charles Baudouine is more concerned with psychology than ritual. Baudouine, C., (1952) *Le triomphe du héros. Étude psychoanalytique sur le mythe du héros et les grandes épopées*, Plon, Paris.

Jung's notion of archetypal images is discussed in Campbell's *Hero With a Thousand Faces* (1949), in which Campbell suggests that a monomyth emerges, see Prologue: The Monomyth. Psychological ideas also strongly emerge in Campbell's *The Masks of God*. Eliade also developed ideas from Malinowski's work and is heavily involved in the ritual as well as the psychology schools. See Meletinsky, 2000, p39-53 for a contrast between these two myth theorists.

Lewis' view of Freud is criticised in Kirkpatrick, H., 'Lewis contra Freud' *CSL: Bulletin of the New York C.S. Lewis Society*, No. 40, (February 1973).

See also Plank, R., (March 1973) 'Can Lewis and Freud be Reconciled?' *CSL: Bulletin of the New York C.S. Lewis Society*, No. 41.

Armand Nicholi provides a discussion of the main differences between Freud and Lewis in Nicholi, A.M., jr., (2002) *The Question of God, C.S. Lewis and Sigmund Freud Debate God, Love, Sex, and the Meaning of Life*, The Free Press

- ¹¹ Bodkin, M., (1934) *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry, Psychological Studies of Imagination*, London: Oxford University Press.

Tillyard, E.M.W., (1948) 'Milton and Primitive Feeling' *The Miltonic Setting*, London, p43-59.

Also, Walter Hooper points out that Tillyard's comments in *Some Mythical Elements in English Literature* (1961) are also useful despite being published after Lewis' essay 'Psycho-Analysis and Literary Criticism' (1942), (see Hooper in Lewis, 1969, p296, also Tillyard, 1961, p10 and pp. 13-18). Lewis had previously criticised Tillyard (see Lewis, C.S., and Tillyard, E.M.W., (1939) *The Personal Heresy*, London: Oxford University Press), concerning the identification of poetry with 'the poet's personal feelings' (Griffiths, 1992, p14). However Alan Bede Griffiths saw this as a weakness on Lewis' part maintaining that, in this controversy, Lewis too easily dismissed the role of the unconscious as a creational force and the view of 'the imagination, as Coleridge and Wordsworth understood it, ... (as) the meeting place of conscious and unconscious' (Griffiths, 1992, p14).

- ¹² Wheelwright, P., (1954) *The Burning Fountain: A Study in Language and Symbolism*, University of Indiana Press, and also Wheelwright, P., (1955) 'The Semantic Approach to Myth' in *Journal of American Folklore* LVII:473-481.

Urban, W., (1939) *Language and Reality*, Allen and Unwin, London.

Count, E., (1960) 'Myth as a World View: A biosocial synthesis' in *Culture in History: Essays in Honour of Paul Radin*, Diamond, S., (Ed.) Columbia University Press, New York.

Langer, S., (1949) 'On Cassirer's Theory of Language and Myth' in *The Philosophy of Ernst Cassirer*, Schilpp, P.A., (Ed.) Tudor Pub., New York.

Langer, S., (1953) *Feeling and Form, A Theory of Art Development*, Routledge & Kegan Paul limited.

See also, Schultz, W., (2000) *Cassirer and Langer on Myth*, Garland Publishing.

- ¹³ *Poetic Diction* was a philosophical work that emerged from Barfield's Oxford studies, 'Poetic Diction was a refinement of his (Barfield's) B. Litt. thesis' (Tennyson, 1999, pxix). See also Appendix entries Reilly 1971 and Morris 1977.

- ¹⁴ Divine influences, Lewis suggested, could be ‘a *preparatio evangelica*, divine hinting in poetic and ritual form at the same central truth which was later focussed and (so to speak) historicized in the Incarnation’ (Lewis, 1996d, p91).
- Paul Avis points out the tensions and inherent illogic in myth, and particularly Christian myth. See Avis, P., (1999) *God and the Creative Imagination, Metaphor, Symbol and Myth in Religion and Theology*, Routledge.
- ¹⁵ See Carpenter, 1997, Chapter 3, ‘Mythopoeia’.
- ¹⁶ Aarne, A., & Thompson, S. (1973) *The Types of the Folktale*, 2nd ed., Folklore Fellows Communication n.184; Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, Helsinki.
- ¹⁷ Lévi-Strauss, C., (1955) ‘The Structural Study of Myth’ in *Journal of American Folklore*, LXVIII(270):428-444, reprinted in (1958) ‘La Structure des mythes’ in *Anthropologie structurelle*, p227-255.
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Fischer, J.L., (1963) 'La Description de la Signification et la Mythologie Comparée' in *L'Homme*, 3, no. 3:51-66.

For a more comprehensive listing see Propp, 1984, pxvi to pxvii, and also Meletinsky, E., 2000, pp. 353-411.

- ¹⁸ Lévi-Strauss, C., (1955) 'The Structural Study of Myth' in *Journal of American Folklore* LXVII(270):428-444. Also (1964) *Mythologiques* IV Vols., Plon, Paris.
- ¹⁹ Ferdinand de Saussure founded structural linguistics according to his entry in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, 1998, p713, Audi, R., (Ed.) Cambridge University Press. Saussure's major works include *Mémoire sur le système primitif des voyelles dans les langues indo-européennes* (1879) and *Course in General Linguistics* (1916).
- ²⁰ See Nott, 1953; Moorman, 1960; Wright, 1971; Carnell, 1974; Meilaender, 1998, pp. 70 to 84.
- ²¹ Eagleton, 1996, p90 explains this most succinctly.
- ²² Lévi-Strauss, C., (1955) 'The Structural Study of Myth' in *Journal of American Folklore* LXVII(270):428-444. Also (1964) *Mythologiques* IV vol., Plon, Paris. See also Meletinsky, E., 2000, pp. 353-411 for a comprehensive bibliography of Lévi-Strauss' works.
- See also Marius Buning's essay 'Perelandra Revisited in the Light of Modern Allegorical Theory' (1991) in Schakel & Huttar, (Eds.) (1991) *Word and Story in C.S. Lewis*, University of Missouri Press. Buning uses Lévi-Strauss' notions of myth and binary opposition in his analysis of *Perelandra*. See also the comments on Buning 1991 in my Appendix.
- ²³ Frye, N., (1963) *Fables of Identity, Studies in Poetic Mythology*, Harcourt Brace, is a useful and more concise collection of Frye's main essays on myth.
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Also, for example, Carl Dee Dockery draws upon the theories of Jung in his 1975 dissertation 'The Myth of the Shadow in the Fantasies of Williams, Lewis, and Tolkien' See my Appendix entry for Dockery, 1975.

Critical reaction to Lewis and myth can be found in my Appendix.

⁴⁸ See Lewis, 1996b, pp. 40-49 for Lewis' criticism of allegory and psychoanalysis.

See also Lewis, 1996d, p91 for Lewis' comments on aspects of myth such as naturalism, history, ritual, story.

⁴⁹ Barfield, 1989, pp. 120-122.

1

C.S. Lewis' Thought on Myth

C.S. Lewis' thought on myth changed over his lifetime (1898-1963). These developments emerged through his intellectual growth, the experience of living through two world wars and influences from his personal life. His involvement with literary friends and the Oxford Socratic debating society enabled Lewis to test his ideas on myth in the heat of academic debate. Lewis had a long involvement with myth and it affected him perhaps more profoundly than he subsequently influenced the debate on myth. He continually returned to myth in his academic and fictional writing, with few of his writings devoid of a reference to some aspect of myth. One reason for this fascination is that he drew aesthetic experiences from myth. These fired his desire to repeat those experiences which led him to seek out myths and mythological literature to regain whatever state he believed they imparted.

It is possible to establish how Lewis' perception and enjoyment of myth came to dominate his life from his comments in his autobiography *Surprised by Joy* (1955). In this work he describes how myth affected him from his youth to the time of his conversion to belief in Christ.¹ We can see how, as a boy, he was deeply affected by his mother's death and his father's mood swings.² He had a rapid intellectual development.³ These factors contributed to his early sense of isolation and introversion. He became more interested in books than going to dances.⁴ Whilst he blamed his father for his early 'distrust or dislike of emotion' (Lewis, 1977e, p9), Lewis goes on to describe how his reading led him to believe that 'at the age of six, seven, and eight - I was living almost entirely in my imagination' (Lewis, 1977e, p18) and works such as those of E. Nesbit became sources of romantic enjoyment. As well as reading about imaginary lands, mythical creatures and chivalrous adventures, he also invented his own imaginary world of Animal-Land. Lewis was later dismissive of this early juvenilia, asserting that Animal-Land had 'nothing whatever in common with Narnia except the anthropomorphic beasts. Animal-Land, by its whole quality, excluded the least hint of

wonder' (Lewis, 1977e, p18). Thus whilst the older Lewis considered this world to be a failure, as a boy he spent long hours and much effort working out intricate details for an entirely imaginary world that included anthropomorphic characters, chivalric adventures, detailed history, maps and drawings. It is as though the religious conversion, which culminates his autobiography, helped him to declare his passion for the simple enjoyment of adventures in the imagination that these types of works inspire.

The wonder and emotional responses that he came to crave most emerged from mythopoeic works such as Longfellow's *Saga of King Olaf* and 'Tegnér's Drapa'.⁵ These works inspired Lewis' desire, 'I desired with almost sickening intensity something never to be described (except that it is cold, spacious, severe, pale, and remote)' (Lewis, 1977, p20; Lewis' brackets). This intense response to the mythic description of the death of Balder, the Norse god whose death is the subject of Longfellow's poem 'Tegnér's Drapa', seized the young Lewis in a moment of overwhelming emotional intensity yet, almost instantly, he tells us that the experience was lost and replaced by the less satisfying sense of 'wishing I were back in it' (Lewis, 1977, p20). These kinds of intense emotional response form moments that are composed of overwhelming desire, longing and bliss. They were followed by dissatisfaction through 'unsatisfied desire which is itself more desirable than any other satisfaction' (Lewis, 1977, p20).

Lewis gave a variety of names to this kind of experience, terming it 'Joy' and later incorporating it within the umbrella term of *Sehnsucht*.⁶ An aspect of his *Sehnsucht* involved the experience he derived from myth, the mythic, and mythopoeic works. Lewis' sense of momentary overwhelming recalls the philosopher Ernst Cassirer's description of the way that mythical consciousness possesses the mind. Cassirer wrote that 'Myth lives entirely by the presence of its object - by the intensity with which it seizes and takes possession of consciousness in a single moment' (Cassirer, 1955, p35). In *An Experiment in Criticism* (1961), published towards the end of Lewis' life-time of experience and reflection on myth, Lewis comments that the initial reading of a myth introduces us to an object 'more like a thing than a narration' (Lewis, 1996b, p43). In Cassirer's view the sudden possession by the impression means that 'Instead of the dialectical movement of thought ... we have here a mere subjection to the impression itself and its momentary "presence"' (Cassirer, 1955, p35). Cassirer saw mythical

consciousness as an operation of the mind. It is 'inner', subjective, emotive and a kind of objectifying operation.⁷ The process creates a myth-world in consciousness and, through the experience evoked by the myth of Balder, Lewis succumbed to the 'world' of Norse myth. In Cassirer's theoretics whilst mythical consciousness is considered to have dominated the thought of primitive man it also remains part of modern man. To use another term from *Experiment in Criticism*, we might say that myth waits to overwhelm those who can receive 'the Event' of myth.⁸ These observations suggest that myth was involved in evoking certain altered states within Lewis' consciousness in ways he sought to understand.

The death of Lewis' mother had the effect of alienating him from his father⁹ and his early dispatch to boarding school in England meant that Lewis also became literally distanced from his childhood home. At school he lapsed into a period of atheism. In 1911 he chanced upon Arthur Rackham's illustration to a translation of Wagner's *Siegfried and the Twilight of the Gods* which evoked

a vision of huge, clear spaces hanging above the Atlantic in the endless twilight of a Northern summer, remoteness, severity ... and almost at the same moment I knew that I had met this before, long, long ago ... in *Tegner's Drapa*, that Siegfried ... belonged to the same world as Balder and the sunward-sailing cranes (Lewis, 1977e, p62){sic}.

It is thus a myth world to which Lewis returns. He realised that

with that plunge back into my own past there arose at once, almost like heartbreak, the memory of Joy itself, the knowledge that I had once had what I had now lacked for years, that I was returning at last from exile and the desert lands to my own country ... And at once I knew (with fatal knowledge) that to "have it again" was the supreme and only important object of desire (Lewis, 1977e, pp. 62-63).

He immediately set about searching out the full Wagnerian version of the Nibelung, learning about the twilight of the gods, listening to 'The Ride of the Valkyries' and buying an expensive version of *Siegfried* illustrated by Rackham. These stories added 'Northernness' to Lewis' *Sehnsucht*.¹⁰ He began to connect scenes from the Wagnerian world with scenes of the 'real' world of the Wicklow mountains. Eventually Lewis reached the point where 'nature ceased to be a mere reminder of the books, (and

instead) became herself the medium of the real joy' (Lewis, 1977e, p66). Thus nature came to evoke experiences previously triggered by mythic works.

His interest became scholarly when he passed from Wagner to 'everything else I could get hold of about Norse mythology, *Myths of the Norsemen*, *Myths and Legends of the Teutonic Race*, Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*. I became knowledgeable' (Lewis, 1977e, p66). He also found again those pangs of 'Joy' and recognised the difference between them and the purely intellectual satisfaction of 'getting to know the Eddaic universe' (Lewis, 1977e, p66). Through *Myths of the Norsemen* Lewis realised that he shared his interest in Norse myth with childhood friend Arthur Greeves (see Lewis, 1977e, p106). These works on Norse myth also exposed Lewis to ideas on myth theory. For example in *Myths of the Norsemen* (1911) H.A. Guerber described how Northern mythology merged with Christian, 'the Christian festival of Easter ... (acquired the) attributes of the pagan goddess Eástre, from whom it took even the name' (Guerber, 1911, pxiii). For Guerber Northern mythology suffered through its poetic rendering in the *Elder Edda*, 'The early poet loved allegory' (Guerber, 1911, pxiii).

The contrast between Lewis' imaginative, inner life and his outer world was becoming decidedly more pronounced. In *Surprised by Joy* he described escaping from the oppressive school system of 'Bloods' and 'fagging' into mythological worlds. His passion for Norse myth was soon augmented by others, including Celtic,

to enjoy two mythologies (or three, now that I had begun to love the Greek), fully aware of their differing flavours, is a balancing thing, and makes for catholicity. I felt keenly the difference between the stony and fiery sublimity of Asgard, the green, leafy, amorous, and elusive world of Cruachan and the Red Branch and Tir-nan-Og, the harder, more defiant, sun-bright beauty of Olympus (Lewis, 1977e, p94).

Lewis thus progressed from Northern mythology to an appreciation of others. He equated the enjoyment of different mythologies with 'catholicity', as though to enjoy three enabled him to transcend his pet mythology and aspire to a new universality and breadth of view. His mention of the phantom isles of Tir-nan-Og and Irish mythology reminds us that Lewis had been distanced from family, home and country. This may have contributed to the sense of equality in his appreciation of mythologies, rather than a prioritising of a personal national and cultural heritage such as the poet W.B. Yeats

sought to achieve by reviving Celtic myth in Ireland. Despite this professed universality, undoubtedly Norse myth continued to exert a strong power over Lewis so that when he found ‘a book on Celtic mythology ... (it) became if not a rival, yet a humble companion, to Norse’ (Lewis, 1977e, p93). Thus the first imaginative forgings made by Norse myth remained with him as a prime source of ‘Joy’, although he enjoyed each mythology for its different ‘flavour’.

In 1914 Lewis ‘crammed’ for Oxford under the tutelage of William T. Kirkpatrick, the former Headmaster of Lewis’ father’s school. Kirkpatrick is described as possessing a purely logical mind, having abandoned Christianity and embraced Rationalism. He taught Lewis dialectic and under his tutelage Lewis studied Homer, Cicero, Lucretius, Herodotus, Virgil, Euripedes, Sophocles and other Greek and Latin works until, eventually, he found himself able to think in Greek. Lewis had easy access to literature during his youth, ordering books that came a volume or two at a time. He explored Milton, Spenser and Malory in this way. It was a world in which reading was the main entertainment and there were ‘cheap and abundant books’ (Lewis, 1977e, p119).

Kirkpatrick’s rationalism accelerated Lewis’ rejection of Christianity. He felt ‘egged on by Shaw and Voltaire and Lucretius’ (Lewis, 1977e, p138) and fell into such contradictions as disbelieving in a creator and yet being outraged because ‘I had been created without my own permission’ (Lewis, 1977e, pp. 138-139). He also felt the advantages of a materialist universe and was at odds with the Christian faith that ‘placed at the centre what then seemed to me a transcendental Interferer’ (Lewis, 1977e, p139). It was during this period of atheism that Lewis wrote in 1916 to his childhood friend, Arthur Greeves, expressing a euhemeristic view of Odin and Heracles, and proposing that Jesus was originally a Hebrew philosopher called Yeshua (see Introduction). Walter Hooper, Lewis’ secretary in the 1960s and advisor to the Lewis estate after his death, suggests that in this period of his life ‘Lewis continued arguing with himself, thinking very hard about “myth”, by which he meant similar instances of an event (such as a dying god who is revived) found among many religions’ (Hooper, 1979, p7).

Discussion of myth in Lewis’ thought does include this important aspect as Hooper notes, but there are many other aspects of myth that are also fundamental to Lewis’ developing thought. These include ancient myth, the relation of myth and art, the

way that myth can be both narrative pattern and at other times something beyond pattern. Also Lewis defined different 'flavours' for different mythologies, a mythology being a system of myths. He considered the problem of myth and history, and modern myth such as those of popular propaganda that contribute to worldview. Lewis' comments on myth and mythopoeia in literature can be found in diverse writings including his reviews of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, his essays 'On Science Fiction' (1955) and 'Haggard Rides Again' (1960), and his chapter 'On Myth' in *An Experiment in Criticism* (1961). He tended to find something 'extra-literary' or beyond narrative sequence in his Preface to *George MacDonald: an Anthology* (1946), 'On Stories' (1947), and *An Experiment in Criticism* (1961). The best sources for reflecting his thoughts on the dying and reviving god myths and Christ are 'Myth Became Fact' (1944), 'The Grand Miracle' (1945) and *Miracles* (1947). These works help clarify his apologetic position on myth and theology. Dogma and mythology emerge in 'Religion Without Dogma?' (1946). Owen Barfield recommends *Arthurian Torso* (1948), *An Experiment in Criticism*, and *passim* (see Barfield, 1989, p80) for Lewis' views on the relation of myth and imagination. Myth, history and the historicist emerge in Lewis' essay 'Historicism' (1950). For his discussion of modern myths and myth and worldview we must turn to 'Funeral of a Great Myth', 'Is Theology Poetry' (1944), 'On Three Ways of Writing for Children' (1952) and *The Discarded Image* (1964). Whilst there are often comments in each of these works that relate to other aspects of Lewis' discussion of myth, the imposition of these broad divisions illustrates the sense of diversity and range his writings on myth have. It also identifies some of the thematic areas that the otherwise nebulous term 'myth' can encompass.

Clearly Lewis considered many aspects of myth over the course of his life, although confusion and contradiction sometimes emerged as he came to reconsider and develop his ideas. In 'C.S. Lewis and Historicism' (1975), Owen Barfield begins to define such groups although Barfield is primarily concerned with inconsistencies in Lewis' views on historicism. The thematic division of Lewis' views on myth ignores the problems that emerge when areas of discussion feed on each other or turn on several different aspects of myth in one essay or work. For example, in *Reflections on the Psalms* (1961) Lewis discusses pagan creation myths, Christian myth, Plato's mythmaking and myths as lies of propaganda. He railed against the Nazi appropriation

of Nordic myth in 'Notes on the Way' (1942) {later renamed by Walter Hooper as 'First and Second Things'}. However listing these works fails to impart the 'flavour' of Lewis' writing and the unique character of his thought on myth. He also put myth theory into practice with his creative works. This development took place in his creative writings once narrative poems¹¹ and overt allegory¹² were abandoned in favour of theological fantasy with *The Great Divorce*, science fiction with *The Cosmic Trilogy*, children's fantasies in the Narnia books, and the pseudo-historical novel *Till We Have Faces* which retells the myth of Cupid and Psyche. The relation of allegory and myth is discussed in his letters, his preface to the 3rd edition of *Pilgrim's Regress*, and in *The Allegory of Love* (1936). However, Lewis denied allegorical interpretation of his fictions in notes on *The Cosmic Trilogy* and *The Narnia Chronicles*. For criticism of Lewis and myth to be clear and insightful, a path must be found between the purely chronological ordering of his writings and influences, and the thematic development of his thought.

It is clear that Lewis began his journey toward myth theory, philosophy and mythopoeia (becoming a creative myth-maker) with the discovery that reading mythopoeic works inspired experiences. Profound 'Joy' was evoked when he encountered the mythic quality of George MacDonald's *Phantastes* (1858) which he read in March 1916 (see Lewis, 1988a, p47). *Phantastes* tells the adventures of Anodos in Fairyland where he fears his own shadow. Upon eating the nuts and fruits of this land Anodos finds his senses changed so that 'I was brought into far more complete relationship with the things around me' (MacDonald, 1996b, p33), his journey taking him into 'the deeper fairyland of the soul' (MacDonald, 1996b, p67). In this domain evil things symbolise spiritual corruption and Anodos becomes a questing knight after the fashion of Malory's Knights of the Round Table. The enchantment of MacDonald's story caused 'Joy' to resurface for Lewis. He wrote that it was 'as if I had died in the old country and could never remember how I came alive in the new' (Lewis, 1977e, p144). He felt that the emotion was flavoured with Holiness and 'For the first time the song of the sirens sounded like the voice of my mother or my nurse' (Lewis, 1977e, p145). The 'Joy' Lewis felt affected the way he perceived the 'real' world about him

I saw the bright shadow coming out of the book into the real world and resting there, transforming all common things and yet itself unchanged. Or, more

accurately, I saw the common things drawn into the bright shadow (Lewis, 1977e, p146).

In his Preface to *George MacDonald: an Anthology* (1946) Lewis identified MacDonald as a master of the ‘mythopoeic art’ (Lewis, 1946a, pxi). MacDonald’s mythopoeia evokes a ‘new world’ (Lewis, 1946a, pxi) that is strange, dreamlike and has ‘a certain quality of Death’ (Lewis, 1946a, pxi). Lewis considered his imagination to have been baptised through this work and went on to refer to MacDonald as ‘My Master’ and to include him as a fictional guide to the afterlife in his theological fantasy *The Great Divorce* (1946).

In 1918 Lewis served as a soldier in the First World War, experiencing trench warfare during the German final assault on the Western front before being invalided out of the army. During his training, posting, trench fever and subsequent hospitalisation from shrapnel injuries, Lewis found time to write poetry. He was however heading towards an inner crisis, ‘The two hemispheres of my mind were in sharpest contrast. On the one side a many islanded sea of poetry and myth; on the other a glib and shallow “rationalism”’ (Lewis, 1977e, p138). This inner turmoil emerges in Lewis’ first cycle of poems entitled *Spirits in Bondage* (1919). In the poem ‘Victory’ Lewis wrote

Roland is dead, Chuchulain’s crest is low ...

* * * *

The faerie people from our woods are gone,

No Dryads have I found in all our trees.

No Triton blows his horn about our seas

And Arthur sleeps far hence in Avalon

(Lewis, IV, 1-8, 1994b, p170).

This is a bleak conception of the world devoid of myth. Everything in which Lewis found wonder is here shown to be denied to his vision of the ‘real’ world. The great archetypal heroes of Roland, Chuchulain and Arthur are either dead, laid low or asleep and the sea is just water, the woods devoid of nymphs. This materialistic vision has pushed aside the mythical imagination that so fired the child-Lewis. Whilst Lewis’ muse here concerns a loss of myth, in his poem ‘*De Profundis*’ he wrote ‘...Let us curse God most High’ (Lewis, XII:1:3, 1994b, p179) and

Laugh then and slay. Shatter all things of worth,

Heap torment still on torment for thy mirth -

Thou art not Lord while there are Men on earth (Lewis, XII:12:1-3, 1994b, p180).

In the poem 'Apology', which Hooper identifies as having been written at Woringham where Lewis' 1st Somerset Light Infantry suffered heavy enemy fire,¹³ the poet addresses the goddess Despoina, stating that he cannot 'build a heaven of dreams in real hell' (Lewis, VII:1:4). The scenes of death and war that Lewis witnessed led him to condemn 'the evil God who allows all this destruction' (Hooper, 1994, pxi). In the trenches Lewis saw nature torn and ravaged by warfare and in 1918 he wrote to Greeves about lust of the flesh and 'the domination of matter ... (shells, bullets, animal fears, animal pains) I have formulated my equation Matter = Nature = Satan. And on the other side Beauty, the only spiritual & non-natural thing I have yet found' (Lewis, 1994b, pxii). His later conversion to Christianity may have been, in part, driven through a desire to find order, and thus to make sense of the destruction of the 1st World War. This experience was significant for Lewis' development because in the trenches he saw destruction on a mythic scale¹⁴ and was confronted by his own inevitable mortality.

The aftermath of the 1st World War had an impact on Lewis' home life. His friend Paddy Moore had been killed in action and, after Lewis' convalescence and discharge from the army, he set up home at Oxford, with Paddy's mother keeping house.¹⁵ He gained a First in Classics (Classical Honour Moderations, Greek and Latin texts in April 1920) and a First in Greats (*Literae Humaniores*, classical philosophy in August 1922) and a First in English language and literature in July 1923. In 1925 Lewis became a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford and taught philosophy and classical literature. Lewis' studies meant that he had a dual interest in both literature and philosophy and this emerges in his autobiography in which he describes how he grappled with philosophers such as Plato, Lucretius, Berkley and Samuel Alexander whilst retaining an appreciation for literary figures such as Spenser, Milton, Malory and Morris. Lewis' biographer George Sayer observes of Lewis' study of classical philosophy that, unlike most at Oxford who 'read it as a subject of academic study' (Sayer, 1997, p219), for Lewis such philosophy would become a way to belief, 'he never merely thought ideas; he also felt them' (Sayer, 1997, p219).¹⁶ In Lewis' letters and autobiography we can observe how he continually engaged in self-analysis, which

came to impair his enjoyment of myth. Whilst his scholarship increased his understanding of myth, Lewis found that 'I went on adding detail to detail, progressing towards the moment when "I should know most and should least enjoy." Finally I woke from building the temple to find that the God had flown' (Lewis, 1977e, p134). The 'Joy' became tenuous because introspection 'instantly destroyed it' (Lewis, 1977e, p137). He eventually came to attribute this fading of the 'Joy' to the source of it being something that 'shone through' (Lewis, 1977e, p137) a system of mythology. He thus progressed beyond the aridity of attempting to rationalise myth, finding a solution to its power in God.

Lewis brought philosophy and myth together in his narrative poem *Dymer* (1926) using elements from the Norse myth of Ask and Embla, the first man and woman whom the gods created from the ash (Ask) tree and the elm (Embla). Into the carved wood the gods breathed soul and the ability to love. The *Dymer* poem had been developing in Lewis' mind since he was 17 and he had tried to write a prose version. The hero, Dymer, is born into a state-controlled life in a 'Perfect City' (1:2:7) against which he rebels and escapes, thus representing Lewis' reaction against the hypothetical state espoused by Plato in *The Republic*. In the Preface to the 1950 edition Lewis acknowledged the work's debt to the demonic character of political causes in Ireland and the fact that, during the composition of *Dymer*, the 'horrors of the Russian revolution were still fresh in everyone's mind' (Lewis, 1994a, p4). Thus a significant theme in *Dymer* is the breakdown of order through 'the rabble who feel a disinterested hatred of order and reason as such' (Lewis, 1994a, p4). Fitzpatrick has noted the parallels to Wagner in *Dymer*, especially Dymer's slaying of his teacher, recalling Siegfried's murder of Mime. Similarly reflected is Dymer's confrontation with a monster and claim that he is 'the sword of spring' (3:28:1). Siegfried's sword, Nothung, had also belonged to his father, Siegmund, whom Fitzpatrick identifies as 'the tragic hero of spring' (Fitzpatrick, 1981, p6). Fitzpatrick concludes that *Dymer* is 'drenched in the imagery of Wagner's Ring' (Fitzpatrick, 1981, p6). In contrast, George Sayer proposes that *Dymer* 'is an original myth ... it uses traditional folklore elements, such as the enchanted palace and the mysterious bride, with fresh symbolic power' (Sayer, 1997, p214). After his escape from the City Dymer wanders in a wood whilst a revolt begins in his name against the platonic totalitarian state. He encounters a mysterious

woman and ‘begets a monster: which monster, as soon as it has killed its father, becomes a god’ (Lewis, 1994a, p3). Dymer is drawn into passing through curtains into a black void that he finds to be ‘A disembodied world’ (2:28:4) in which he has ‘One pure, one undivided sense of being’ (2:28:7). Here the darkness is ‘smooth as amber’ (2:29:1) and the smell is ‘holy and unholy’ (2:29:3). He becomes enfolded with leaves and foliage in this womb-like environment and experiences ‘A sacred shiver / Of joy from the heart’s centre’ (2:30:3-4). Sex follows with the mysterious woman who ‘represents both the deity and the feminine principle’ (Sayer, 1997, p210). The next day she has disappeared and Dymer begins a search for her but finds instead a wizened old crone who exudes an ‘old matriarchal dreadfulness, / Immovable, intolerable’ (3:23:2-3). These female figures with their suggestive earth imagery can be interpreted as manifestations of the Earth goddess popular in many mythologies, thus symbolising Nature. Lewis’ 1918 letter to Greeves offers insight into his early intentions,

The main idea {of *Dymer*} is that of development by self-destruction, both of individuals & species (as nature produces man only to conquer her, & man produces a future & higher generation to conquer the ideals of the last ...

“Dymer” is changed to Ask (You remember Ask & Embler in the Norse myths) & it is in the 3rd person under the title of “The Redemption of Ask” (Lewis, 1979b, p239).

Lewis reverted to *Dymer* as the title of the final version, also including the themes of dream, occultism, gods and the rebirth of the earth after Dymer’s death.

Whilst *Dymer* had good reviews its readership was small. Sayer notes that it was a poem at odds with the trends then dominating poetry. It was long and ‘unfashionable in that it rhymed and scanned’ (Sayer, 1997, p214) and it was intended to be read aloud when such ways of reading poetry were ‘beginning to be a lost art’ (Sayer, 1997, p214). The importance of *Dymer* in the development of Lewis’ thought on myth lies in his early attempt to grapple with the themes of death, rebirth and female deity, themes that would resurface in later works and have special importance for his novel *Till We Have Faces* (1956). 1926 was also the year that saw Lewis discuss dying and reviving gods in *The Golden Bough* with his Magdalen College colleague T.D. ‘Harry’ Wheldon after which Lewis began to ponder the difference between the pagan dying and reviving gods and Christ.¹⁷ Wheldon, whom Lewis had thought a cynic, taught philosophy at

Magdalen and Lewis realised that Wheldon had arrived at a philosophical belief in the truth of the Triune God.

Leo Baker, one of Lewis' earliest Oxford friends, maintains that in the 1920s Lewis 'lived in an enclosed world with rigid walls built by his logic and intelligence, and trespassers would be prosecuted' (Baker, 1992, p4). They had shared interests in poetry and literature and, as aspiring poets, 'Lewis insisted that one's mind should be tuned to ancient myth. We rejected Greek and Roman as already well used in the past, and the Arthurian legends belonged to Tennyson and the Pre-Raphaelites, so our choice must be the *Mabinogion*' (Baker, 1992, p8). Baker introduced Lewis to Cecil Harwood and Owen Barfield in 1922. Harwood and Barfield had embraced Anthroposophy through the writings of the German philosopher Rudolf Steiner but Lewis refuted Harwood's insistence that spiritual forces pervaded people's lives, a response that made Harwood brand Lewis a 'hopeless materialist' (Griffin, 1988, p32). Lewis eventually progressed to the diametrically opposite view, embracing the spiritual life and particularly believing in a supernatural God but he continued to reject Anthroposophy, mainly because of its uncomfortable occult associations. In Steiner's philosophy God is the Logos or Cosmic Intelligence, and the mind is an organ whose relationship to thought is analogous to the way the eye is related to light (see Steiner in Barfield, 1966, p228).¹⁸

Lewis' development progressed through debate, testing his ideas about literature, history, philosophy, theology and religion. The group of Oxford friends called themselves 'The Inklings' and met regularly, often reading from their own works in progress. The debates with Barfield, Tolkien, Dyson, Harwood and others forced Lewis to champion his atheistic views against opposition that came increasingly from men with religious convictions. However Lewis acknowledged that 'Barfield's conversion to Anthroposophy marked the beginning of what I can only describe as the Great War between him and me ... which lasted for years. And this Great War was one of the turning points of my life' (Lewis, 1977e, pp. 166-167).¹⁹ In a letter written during this 'Great War' with Barfield, Lewis submitted this definition of myth

A *myth* is a description or story introducing supernatural personages or things, determined not ... by motives arising from events within the story, but by the

supposedly immutable relations of the personages or things ... and not ... connected with any given place or time (Lewis in Adey, 1978, p134). At this point in his thought Lewis perceived myth as story which, although dislocated from location, period and events, is driven by archetypal conflicts between supernatural beings. In his later comments on myth²⁰ Lewis affirmed that something beyond story arises from myth. In Preface to *George MacDonald: an Anthology* he attributes a special importance to the pattern of events, identifying myth as 'a story where the mere pattern of events is all that matters' (Lewis, 1946a, pix). Its significance lies in a curious reversal of what is generally supposed to be important. Thus whilst in poetry words are valued as the 'body' and the 'theme' is the 'soul', 'in myth the imagined events are the body and something inexpressible is the soul' (Lewis, 1946a, px). That inexpressible something, that mythical quality, rises beyond story's successive elements and affects our normal mode of consciousness.

Various thoughts on myth emerged from Lewis' debates with Barfield. In his letter to Barfield of June 1928 Lewis proposed that 'we need a new word for the "science of the nature of myths" since "mythology" has been appropriated to the myths themselves' (Lewis, 1988a, p255).²¹ From his autobiography we know that Lewis' discussions with Barfield led him to 'a more respectful, if not more delighted, attitude to Pagan myth' (Lewis, 1977e, p187). Barfield's first book *History in English Words* (1926) was a study of the etymology of words from which Barfield was able to observe the 'fundamental dissimilarity between Greek and Roman mythology' (Barfield, 1926, p88). For example Roman gods and goddesses 'were felt less and less as living beings, and more and more as mere abstract intellectual conceptions' (Barfield, 1926, p88). He cited, for example, the Roman corn goddess Ceres from which derives the word cereal, proposing that the visible aspect of this word's meaning came to be prevalent as the invisible part was reduced, 'Thus, the mythical world was much less real to the Romans than it had been to the Greeks. It was more like a world of mental abstractions' (Barfield, 1926, p89). This notion influenced Lewis' views on how the gods of classical poetry should be interpreted in *Allegory of Love* (1936), see Chapter II. Barfield proposed that emperors became divine upon death and objects were attributed to either a god or part of a god. Rome eventually adopted the myths of Greece and Egypt in a process of absorption that culminated for the late Roman Empire in the 'attenuation of

the imaginative and supernatural element in Roman mythology' (Barfield, 1926, p89). Barfield saw this as a process akin to sterilisation. Eventually the Celtic influence from the Northern areas of the Roman Empire resulted in a hybridised low Latin, 'So it was that new life came to be breathed into some of the dead abstractions of Roman mythology; but it was a very different life from the old one' (Barfield, 1926, p90).

For Barfield words had a greater life and magical influence the further he looked into the past for a classical meaning. In *Poetic Diction* (1928) he proposed that words had 'a mythical content' (Barfield, 1951, p89) {see Introduction and the similarity noted by Carpenter to Cassirer's theory}. In the distant past of articulate man's overall epoch 'we trace ... the final stages of a vast, age-long metamorphosis from the kind of outlook which we loosely describe as "mythological" to the kind which we may describe equally loosely as "intellectual thought"' (Barfield, 1926, p84). Thus he maintained that the process of language change reflected the developing consciousness of humanity as human thought became more abstract and the division between subject and object became an ever-deepening divide. Barfield's notion greatly influenced Lewis, see *Allegory of Love*, Chapter II (particularly Lewis, 1958, p44). In *Miracles* (1947) Lewis states that

Mr Barfield has shown, as regards the history of language, that words did not start by referring merely to physical objects and then get extended by metaphor to refer to emotions, mental states and the like. On the contrary, what we now call the "literal and metaphorical" meanings have both been disengaged by analysis from an ancient unity of meaning which was neither or both (Lewis, 1974, pp. 81-82).

This notion of an 'ancient unity' signifying a lost unified worldview had important consequences for Lewis' views on theology (see later comments concerning *Miracles*). There is an important distinction between the importance of words that had a mythical content in ancient eras of man and the concept of myth as story in which, for Lewis, the pattern of events is more important than the words used to express a myth. In Lewis' Preface to *George MacDonald: an Anthology*, he proposes that 'Myth does not essentially exist in *words* at all' (Lewis, 1946a, pix). When Lewis thought about the great myth of Balder he realised that he was 'not thinking of any one's words ... (but) a particular pattern of events' (Lewis, 1946a, pix). Any medium could convey the events

and the myth would still be imparted. Whilst Lewis supported Barfield's ancient unity, hence the mythical content of words, in his Preface to *George MacDonald: an Anthology* he takes a step beyond words by declaring that myth does not really exist in words thus a contradiction seemingly arises. However there is really no big contradiction since there is simply a split in myth and language that 'are two diverse shoots from the same parent stem' (Cassirer, 1953b, p88) and the 'same impulse of symbolic formulation, springing from the same basic mental activity' (Cassirer, 1953b, p88). Lewis is trying to grasp at an activity in consciousness when he approaches either the story of Balder or language and myth. His apparently disparate views of myth and words both stem from the same mental activity. For Barfield and Cassirer primitive, imagist man thought less conceptually and there was a sense of fusion between his inner self and his perception of external reality. There was thus less subject-object polarisation than characterises modern meaning (see Cassirer, 1953b, p88). However, for Cassirer, despite the changes of myth, language and the division inherent in the mental processes of man over time, myth still remains an active part of modern consciousness used in language formation, amongst other things discussed in the following chapter.

Lewis' 1931 discussion with Tolkien of ancient man's mythmaking power also played a significant part in changing Lewis' views on myth and faith (see Introduction) because, despite the experiences Lewis received from myth, he had until then generally dismissed myths as lies. Tolkien argued that they were the truth according to early man's world-view. With conversion Lewis came to realise that worldview changes over time, beliefs alter for each civilisation and thus he foresaw that, inevitably, they would change for eras that follow the 20th century. Barfield later questioned Lewis' views on historicism proposing that Lewis' 'firm intuition ... of the actuality of imagination and of myth led him into certain inconsistencies' (Barfield, 1989, p78). For Barfield these emerged in Lewis' approach to history, myth, immanence and transcendence. However, Lewis acknowledged that it was Barfield who taught him 'not to patronize the past, and ... to see the present as itself a "period"' (Lewis, 1958, pviii){sic}. In this respect 20th century civilisation will be as transient as Egyptian, Roman or Medieval ones.

By viewing his era as simply another period Lewis felt the faults of his times more acutely delineated than ever before and he determined to make others realise this

truth. Thus it is perhaps not surprising that Lewis' first major work after his conversion was *The Pilgrim's Regress* (1933), written in 1932, in which he attacked what he considered to be erroneous beliefs. In *The Pilgrim's Regress* Lewis created characters from abstractions and invented places without geographical reality. He explained that allegory was not to be considered as 'a disguise' (Lewis, 1977a, p19) but instead 'all good allegory exists not to hide but to reveal; to make the inner world more palpable by giving it an (imagined) concrete embodiment' (Lewis, 1977a, p19). Whilst he later considered his allegory in *Pilgrim's Regress* to have failed, thus necessitating his inclusion of chapter headlines in a later edition in order to aid the reader's understanding, he also considered that 'wherever the symbols are best, the key is least adequate. For when allegory is at its best, it approaches myth, which must be grasped with the imagination, not with the intellect' (Lewis, 1977a, p19). Thus he hoped that the allegorical figures of North and South and Mr. Sensible might aspire to 'some touch of mythical life' (Lewis, 1977a, p19). Whilst his rejection of the intellect seems to contradict his words concerning the satisfaction he professed to derive from his intellectual appreciation of the Eddaic universe (see *Surprised by Joy*), clearly Lewis considered that allegory is a lesser thing than myth and that the primary appeal of myth is to the imagination.

During the journey in *Pilgrim's Regress* the pilgrim is confronted by the voice of God who explains that myth is 'the veil under which I have chosen to appear ... For this end I made your senses and for this end your imagination, that you might see My face and live' (Lewis, 1977a, p217). The myth of Semele is mentioned in which a mortal girl burns to death when Zeus appeared without being veiled. Thus Lewis draws classical myth into the Christian framework. Subsequently God explains to John about the myths of ascent and descent, death and rebirth, 'Child, if you will, it *is* mythology. It is but truth, not fact: an image, not the very real. But then it is My mythology' (Lewis, 1977a, p217). Here, for Peter Schakel, the

distinction in the second sentence is perplexing, for a decade later, in "Myth Became Fact," he (Lewis) would write, "What flows into you from the myth is not truth but reality." Either Lewis was being unusually careless with terminology, or there is a shift in emphasis, a clarification or refinement in his

thinking about myth, between the mid-1930s and the mid-1940s (Schakel, 1984, p123).

However, during the 1930s myth, for Lewis, retains truth and God is revealed therein. The stress on truth suggests, for Schakel, its value and acceptability to Lewis, although ‘As yet there is no attempt to describe myth as a “tasting” of Reality, as there will be in “Myth Became Fact” ’ (Schakel, 1984, p124). In Platonic theory God is the ultimate Reality and whilst this mythology is God’s and ‘an image, not the very real’ (Lewis, 1977a, p217) it is still therefore, not a reflection of the shadow world. Thus it is arguable that to experience the myths of death and rebirth must at least partly be to ‘taste’ reality.

In the intervening years between *The Pilgrim’s Regress* and ‘Myth Became Fact’ (1944) Lewis continued to augment his ideas about myth with almost every new work and debate. 1935 saw the culmination of Lewis’ on-going study of allegorical love poetry, the results of which eventually became *The Allegory of Love, A Study in Medieval Tradition* (1936). In this work he comments on Gower’s collection of myths in his poem *Confessio Amantis* (circa 1390). In the discussion between Amans and Genius in *Liber Octavus* Lewis discerned meaning beyond the poet’s intentions,

We have here one of those rare passages in which medieval allegory rises to myth, in which the symbols, though fashioned to represent mere single concepts, take on new life and represent rather the principles - not otherwise accessible - which unite whole classes of concepts (Lewis, 1958, p220).

Here Lewis reflects on the elevation of symbols intended to form single concepts into a higher rank of importance. He saw in the transcending of the original meaning the new level of meaning ascending into myth. In this elevation there is a process of determination that recalls Cassirer’s observations of constancy in the face of fluidity and return to the universal.²² Lewis’ uniting principles suggest the dominion of myth over logical modes of thought, recalling Cassirer’s hypothesis in *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. 2, *Mythical Thought* (German publication 1925). Whilst Lewis encountered allegorical symbols he could realise their meaning and power logically through the domination of the universal over the particulars in an Aristotelian way.²³ However when classes of concepts are united and allegory rises to the higher realm of myth then everything is viewed through a new immediacy, previously unattainable.

In Lewis' address to 'the Martlets' Oxford society in 1937 he defended the 19th century poet, novelist and medievalist William Morris' use of elements from Old Norse and Icelandic sagas.²⁴ Morris' translation of *Beowulf* had been inspirational to the young Lewis and, by the mid-1930s, Lewis was advocating the study of *Beowulf* at "beer and Beowulf" parties' (Griffin, 1988, p137) which Tolkien occasionally attended. Tolkien had defended *Beowulf* in his 1936 lecture '*Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics*'. In this lecture, Tolkien compared southern and northern mythologies, recognising the 'inhumanity' of the Greek Gods and the difference in status of the monsters of both mythologies. Euhemerism saved the Northern gods 'by embalming them' (Tolkien, 1997, p25), reducing them to mere ancestors of kings. Comparing mythologies, the southern gods do not have the northern gods' fear of death, they are timeless and their mythology holds the 'promise of a profounder thought' (Tolkien, 1997, p25). Tolkien argued that the Greek, or southern mythology, had to either 'go forward to philosophy or relapse into anarchy' (Tolkien, 1997, p25).

The contrast between Northern and Southern mythologies had first been brought to Lewis' attention through his childhood reading of *Myths of the Norsemen*. Guerber states from the first page of chapter one that 'Northern mythology ... is not graceful and idyllic in character, like the religion of the sunny South' (Guerber, 1911, p1), the theme of Northern mythology being 'perpetual struggle' (Guerber, 1911, p1). Guerber's introduction concludes with these words by William Morris on the *Volsunga Saga*,

This is the great story of the North, which should be to all our race what the Tale of Troy was to the Greeks - to all our race first, and afterwards, when the change of the world has made our race nothing more than a name of what has been - a story too - then should it be to those that come after us no less than the Tale of Troy has been to us (Morris in Guerber, 1911, pxvi).

Sayer notes that Lewis was 'thrilled with this passage' (Sayer, 1997, p99) and found Morris' works to be an enduring source of Northernness,²⁵ although he admitted that through 'the world of Morris' (Lewis, 1977e, p137) he initially confused 'Joy' with eroticism. In contrast to Morris' creations Lewis considered that the 'Pygmalion myth (in Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*) or resurrection myth in the last act is the substance (of the play) and the characters, motives, and half-hearted attempts at explanation which surround it are the shadow' (Lewis, 1969, p224). Similarly he proposed that Morris

should not be dismissed on the grounds that 'his whole world is an invention' (Lewis, 1969, p224), because the emotions and intellectual relevance they have to ours means that 'They express the author's deepest sense of reality' (Lewis 1969, p224).

1939 saw the outbreak of the Second World War and the staff of Oxford University Press relocated from London to Oxford. This was how Charles Williams, who worked on the editorial staff of OUP, came into contact with the Inklings. Three years previously Lewis had read Williams' *The Place of the Lion* (1933), and described it as 'based on the Platonic theory of the other world in which the archetypes of all earthly qualities exist ... these archetypes start sucking our world back' (Lewis, 1979b, p479). Thus the strength of the archetypal lion draws away strength from our world and terrestrial butterflies disappear into the archetypal butterfly. The work struck Lewis as 'deeply religious and ... profoundly learned' (Lewis, 1979b, p479). Williams had been doing editorial work on Lewis' *Allegory of Love* and, whilst working in Oxford, Williams became an occasional guest lecturer. Lewis and Williams struck up a friendship and Lewis took on board Williams' notion of substitution.²⁶ Williams' books are supernatural thrillers in which myths and legends are introduced into contemporary settings. Lewis recognised the trap of complacency explored through Williams' creation of the character Damaris Tighe because, whilst she studied Medieval Philosophy, it 'never once occurred to her that the objects of Medieval thought might have any reality' (Lewis, 1982b, p50). He hesitated over calling Williams a mystic on his BBC radio talk in 1949.²⁷ Lewis clearly enjoyed Williams' transcendent and theological fantasy realisation of platonic archetypes in *The Place of the Lion*, considering this a laudable treatment of archetype in contrast to his criticism of the reductive use that psychoanalysis makes of archetypes by explaining them away as part of peoples' psychoses.²⁸

Lewis expounded further on archetypes, as well as Christian theology and mythology, during 1941 whilst preparing his book *A Preface to Paradise Lost* (1942) in which he both attacked T.S. Eliot's notions of criticism and identified the forms of epic poetry. He observed that 'Milton's theme leads him to deal with certain very basic images in the human mind - with the archetypal patterns, as Miss Bodkin would call them, of Heaven, Hell, Paradise, God, Devil, the Winged Warrior, the Naked Bride, the Outer Void' (Lewis, 1952b, p46).²⁹ However, he criticised Jung's theory of archetypes

proposing that 'the mystery of primordial images is deeper, their origin more remote' (Lewis, 1969, p300). In *A Preface to Paradise Lost* Lewis observes that Milton exploits these images and that 'We are his organ: when he appears to be describing Paradise he is in fact drawing out the Paradisal Stop in us' (Lewis, 1952b, p47). Lewis considered that 'mythical poetry ought not to attempt novelty in respect of its ingredients' (Lewis, 1952, p56) because he felt 'giants, dragons, paradises, gods, and the like are themselves the expression of certain basic elements in man's spiritual experience ... (they form) a language which speaks the else unspeakable' (Lewis, 1952b, p56). Milton's paradise is described by Lewis as a dream. His epic becomes a rite shared by the reader, thus readers find themselves 'enacting Hell and Paradise, the Fall and the repentance' (Lewis, 1952b, p59). Through the use of ritual a 'concentration could be achieved' (Lewis, 1952b, p60) such that those participating in the ritual no longer think of the rite but become 'engrossed by that *about which* the rite is performed' (Lewis, 1952b, p69). However, a boy unwittingly seized by Milton's work can access this state, provided he isn't critically analysing it, and discover that a 'new strength and width and brightness and zest have transformed his world' (Lewis, 1952b, p60). Thus the ritual can be a tool to obtain the desired mode of consciousness, but it can also be entered without realising the mechanism involved. Lewis acknowledges that he was speaking from his belief as a Christian, which he considered to be an advantage in helping him to feel as Milton wanted (see Lewis, 1952b, p64).

In Lewis' later comments on archetypes in 'Haggard Rides Again' (1960), he noted that whilst Haggard's stories are soundly constructed, they suffer from poor writing. Instead of the quality of his writing Lewis suggested that it was 'the story itself, the myth' (Lewis, 1982b, p130) that held the reader's interest,

Haggard is the text-book case of the mythopoeic gift pure and simple - isolated, as if for inspection, from nearly all those more specifically literary powers with which it so fortunately co-exists in, say, *The Ancient Mariner*, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, or *The Lord of the Rings*' (Lewis, 1982b, p130).

Ironically Lewis suggested that Haggard's mythopoeic power weakened as his art improved for *Ayesha*, which has a quality of writing above *She*, however,

The mythical status of *She* is indisputable. As we all know, Jung went to it for the embodiment of an archetype. But even Jung did not, I think, get to the centre.

If his view were right, the myth ought to function only for those to whom Ayesha is a powerful erotic image. And she is not so for all who love *She* (Lewis, 1982b, pp. 130-131).

He saw the heart of Ayesha's story, like Morris' *Well at the World's End*, in the externalisation of 'the same psychological forces; our irreconcilable reluctance to die, our craving for an immortality in the flesh, our empirical knowledge that this is impossible ... (any such attempt) would call down the vengeance of the gods' (Lewis, 1982b, p131). Whilst he judged Morris' heroine to be too human, Haggard's heroine remains a 'lonely she-Prometheus' (Lewis, 1982b, p131). Lewis claimed that Haggard was impervious to fashion because 'A great myth is relevant as long as the predicament of humanity lasts; as long as humanity lasts. It will always work, on those who can receive it, the same catharsis' (Lewis, 1982b, p131). There is a sense of Lewis' own frustration with those who attacked his works, as Haggard's contemporaries vindictively 'attacked him in his own day ... No one is indifferent to the mythopoeic. You either love it or else hate it "with a perfect hatred"' (Lewis, 1982b, pp. 131-132), a view Lewis had expressed earlier in 'On Science Fiction' (1955). Lewis attributed this opposition to 'a reluctance to meet Archetypes' (Lewis, 1982b, p132) and he believed that this fact bears 'involuntary witness to their disquieting vitality' (Lewis, 1982b, p132).

The early 1940s saw Lewis engaged in satirical writing,³⁰ radio broadcasting,³¹ and his involvement with the Oxford Socratic debating society.³² The Socratic forum challenged Lewis on problems such as the conflict between science and Christianity.³³ The ideas of 'Science and Miracles', read to the Socratic Club in 1943, were developed into the book *Miracles*, published in 1947.³⁴ In *Miracles* Lewis explains his view of 'God outside Nature, (thus) a transcendent and supernatural God' (Lewis, 1974, pp. 34-35). He found this easier to accept than the notion of 'Nature producing valid thought' (Lewis, 1974, p37) which naturalists view as a cosmic consciousness. He acknowledged that the idea that God 'had a "Son," just as if God were a mythological deity like Jupiter or Odin' (Lewis, 1974, p72) presents a "savage" or "primitive" picture of the universe' (Lewis, 1974, p72). This is the kind of conception that for two millennia 'knowledge has been steadily refuting' (Lewis, 1974, p73). Influenced by Barfield's notion of an 'ancient unity' (see above), Lewis criticised the use of metaphorical meaning to understand Christ carrying the cross, or hell 'fire'. Similarly he rejects interpretation of

the Fall as not being literal. He maintained that the doctrine of the Trinity helps to explain 'supernatural, unconditioned reality' (Lewis, 1974, p83), and that this reality is God who entered into our reality in the body of Christ. For Lewis, the inadequacy of language means we have little hope of grasping the transcendent God without recourse to metaphorical meanings which further compound this difficulty. Thus whilst Christianity's claims concerning Christ may contain 'noble sentiments and moral truths. So does Greek mythology; so does Norse. But that is quite a different affair' (Lewis, 1974, p84).

On the question of Christ's death and resurrection, Lewis recognised in *Miracles* that it is a pattern similar to the 'annual death and resurrection of the corn' (Lewis, 1974, p117). This yearly cycle had penetrated many religions and perhaps originated with tribal beliefs. For Lewis the deity 'Adonis, Osiris, or another - {are} almost undisguisedly a personification of the corn, a "corn-king" who died and rose again each year' (Lewis, 1974, p117). Thus Lewis posed the question, 'Is not Christ simply another corn-king?' (Lewis, 1974, p117).³⁵ The difference, for Lewis, is that no one knows when these pagan deities supposedly lived, whilst Christ is 'located' in history and is referred to in Roman reports. The episode of the last supper during which Christ held the bread is cited by Lewis as suggesting a link to the corn-king notion, but whilst Christ '*enacts* the part of the Dying God ... (His) thoughts and words remain quite outside the circle of religious ideas to which the Dying God belongs' (Lewis, 1974, p118). Christ may seem to do 'all the things that Nature-Gods do: He is Bacchus, Venus, Ceres all rolled into one' (Lewis, 1974, p118) but there are no Bacchanalian or aphrodisiac rites because 'He is not the soul of Nature nor any part of Nature. He inhabits eternity ... He is not a Nature-God, but the God of Nature' (Lewis, 1974, p119). The Corn-King myths are explained as a 'portrait of Him ... the Death and Re-birth pattern is in her (Nature) because it was first in Him' (Lewis, 1974, p119). Similarly, Lewis posits the notion of reflection and reality in 'The Grand Miracle' (1945) since 'He (Christ) is here of whom the corn king was an image' (Lewis, 1971, p59), and in *Mere Christianity* death and rebirth myths are viewed as good dreams sent by God. In *Miracles* Lewis asserts that the old myths are preparatory to the Incarnation, 'the truth first appears in *mythical* form and then by a long process of condensing or focusing finally becomes incarnate as History' (Lewis, 1974, pp. 137-138). Thus in

Miracles he rejected theories of myth such as myth as priestly lies, in favour of his view of myth as ‘a real though unfocussed gleam of divine truth falling on human imagination’ (Lewis, 1974, p138), a notion he referred to in *Perelandra*.

A re-assessment occurred in Lewis’ appreciation of mythology after he embraced Christianity. We know he drew a particular power from Norse mythology but Christianity meant that he had to re-consider his view of the importance of different mythologies. Recognising the Hebrews as ‘the chosen people ... (means) their mythology was the chosen mythology - the mythology chosen by God to be the vehicle of the earliest sacred truths’ (Lewis, 1974, p138). The God into man notion means that ‘the truth ... comes down from the “heaven” of myth to the “earth” of history’ (Lewis, 1974, p138) and myth stays myth even though in the story of Christ ‘it becomes Fact’ (Lewis, 1974, p138).³⁶ In ‘Is Theology Poetry?’, read to the Socratic Society in 1944, a hierarchy of mythologies emerges when considering them in terms of Lewis’ imaginative appreciation, ‘If Christianity is only a mythology, then I find the mythology I believe in is not the one I like best. I like Greek mythology much better: Irish better still: Norse best of all’ (Lewis, 1977g, p43). His aesthetic appreciation of the contrasting ‘flavours’ from pagan to Christian mythology changed with belief because the more he believed in Christianity the less he valued its imaginative qualities as art. He concluded that belief makes it harder to engage with the myth,

The modern poets certainly enjoy the Greek gods in a way of which I find no trace in Greek literature. What mythological scenes in ancient literature can compare for a moment with Keats’s *Hyperion*? In a certain sense we spoil a mythology for imaginative purposes by believing in it (Lewis, 1977g, p44).

The problem for the apologetic mythopoeic art is to maintain the imaginative power whilst evoking Christian mythology.³⁷ This suggests a paradox since Lewis’ notion of myth as an ‘unfocussed gleam’ in *Miracles* would suggest a greater and more ‘focussed’ power on the imagination when encountering Christian mythology. In contrast to the lessened imaginative response to believed myth in ‘Is Theology Poetry?’ Lewis appears to change his emphasis in ‘Myth Became Fact’ (1944), where he argues that ‘Even assuming ... that the doctrines of historic Christianity are merely mythical, it is the myth which is the vital and nourishing element in the whole concern’ (Lewis, 1979a, p41).³⁸ For Lewis myth contains an element that abides whilst modern thought moves on, making even its

proponents appear transitory. Lewis' enjoyment of Christian mythology is certainly more complicated in comparison with the enjoyment that came so easily to him from pagan myth.

In 'Myth Became Fact' Lewis returned to the problem of myth that he had been concerned with throughout his early life, recognising that the act of considering myth requires abstract reasoning but that such abstraction removes us from the 'experience' of myth, 'This is our dilemma ... to lack one kind of knowledge because we are in an experience or to lack another kind because we are outside it' (Lewis, 1979a, p42).³⁹ As an example he called on personal experience, proposing that the study of pleasure, or indeed laughter, is impossible whilst experiencing the moment. However, through enjoying a myth people are 'nearest to experiencing as a concrete what can otherwise be understood only as an abstraction' (Lewis, 1979a, p42). The myth of Orpheus and Eurydice evokes feelings of sadness and through comprehending the mythic sufferer's loss the reader receives the myth's affect. This is where Lewis proposed his notion that through myth we can 'taste' reality (see above) because a reader acknowledging an emotional response to the Orphean myth is

not knowing, but tasting; but what you were tasting turns out to be a universal principle ... It is only while receiving the myth as a story that you experience the principle concretely (Lewis, 1979a, p43).

Adumbrating the principle returns us to the world of abstraction. Lewis contended that something vital 'flows' from myth into the recipient and this 'something' is not truth but reality (an advance from *Pilgrim's Regress*). Using a metaphor Lewis demonstrates the separation, or divided state of man, suggesting that 'Myth is the mountain whence all the different streams arise which become truths down here in the valley; *in hac valle abstractionis* (in this valley of separation)' (Lewis, 1979a, p43). Each myth fathers an infinite number of truths on the abstract level. Thus for Lewis myth is not abstract like truth or, like direct experience, bound to the particular, but rather it is both between these two concepts and intertwining them. From the mountain metaphor the stream can be viewed as the life-giving balm of human imagination.

To clarify Lewis' position, although in 'Is Theology Poetry' he pointed out the problem of the denigration of the imaginative response for a mythology we believe in, he asserted in 'Myth Became Fact' that being Christian meant accepting the historical

fact of Christ whilst receiving the myth with the same imaginative engagement with which we receive all myths. In 'Is Theology Poetry?' Lewis, acknowledging his difficulty in imaginatively embracing Christianity only as a mythology, proposed two ways that the imagination works: firstly it 'loves to embrace its object completely' (Lewis, 1977g, p43), and secondly it loves to 'lose itself in a labyrinth' (Lewis, 1977g, p43). The former, suggesting harmony, he termed classical imagination, the latter romantic way suggests surrender to the inextricable. However, in Lewis' opinion Christian Theology does not work 'very well for either' (Lewis, 1977g, p43). Despite these difficulties of receiving the Christian mythology he goes on, in 'Myth Became Fact', to regard those unable to experience the myth and draw upon its emotional intensity as existing in a pitiable state. The 'mythical radiance' resting on theology is, Lewis asserted, something we should embrace with imaginative welcome and so assert ourselves as emotional beings,

If God chooses to be mythopoeic – and is not the sky itself a myth? – shall we refuse to be *mythopathic*? For this is the marriage of heaven and earth: Perfect Myth and Perfect Fact: claiming not only our love and our obedience, but also our wonder and delight (Lewis, 1979a, p45).⁴⁰

In this assertion Lewis is attempting to impose logic upon something ineffable, to fuse two fundamental contrasts. He has reached a zenith from the nadir of his youth in which he viewed myths as lies. I see his attempt to 'marry' myth and fact as emerging from his desire to overcome the inner division or tension between the two halves of his own psyche, the intellectual, logical, materialist who only values facts versus the passionate, poetic, myth lover. He maintains that love, obedience, wonder and delight are claimed by this 'marriage', but we are left to question whether it is possible to wonder as an act of obedience. It is as though he wants to call forth his response on God's demand, something he realised to be impossible when making such a summons on his youthful responses to myth, (see *Surprised by Joy*). This is certainly a very different response to myth from that unforced seizing Lewis experienced as a child when encountering Norse myth because 'obedience' is demanded this time. As he put it in 'Is Theology Poetry?' Christianity means

the humiliation of myth into fact, of God into Man : what is everywhere and always, imageless and ineffable, only to be glimpsed in dream and symbol and the acted poetry of ritual, becomes small, solid ... a man (Lewis, 1977g, p51).

Thus his recognition of the fact of Christ meant the 'humiliation' of myth and his treatment of myth in this way reminds us of his autobiographical acknowledgement of the dualism of his psyche. He wanted to reconcile his intellectual side with its opposite, the fantasist, via the medium of Christian myth.

Whilst Lewis was considering these problems he was also writing fiction and, for Charles Moorman, 'creates his own myth' (Moorman, 1960, p107) in *The Cosmic Trilogy* (1938; 1943; and 1945). Lewis' purpose in these works is that of Christian apology. By setting the first book on Mars as an unfallen world in which the Martians know nothing of the Trinity, Lewis ends up describing 'theological tenets ... (without) the advantage of producing stock responses, which is one of the great advantages of literary allusion to known and accepted myth' (Moorman, 1960, p110). Despite this criticism, more overt Christian allusion certainly emerges in the second book *Perelandra*, and the third is set on Earth thereby allowing for full use of such responses from myth. In the first two novels of *The Cosmic Trilogy* Lewis creates his 'silent-planet myth' (Moorman, 1960, p111). Earth is known to the inhabitants of other worlds as Thulcandra, the silent planet, because, although each planet has a ruling archangel, the evil of Satan's 'rule isolates Earth from the other planets' (Hein, 1998, p220).

One of the advantages of using myth in art is the sense of entering an ordered cosmos of hierarchy and structure. For Lewis the world is fundamentally hierarchical,⁴¹ and for Charles Moorman myths offer a self-contained world and an 'ordered cosmos, an irreducible system of coherent belief upon which he (the poet) can construct an ordered and meaningful poetry' (Moorman, 1960, p2). Satisfaction can be drawn from order and this contrasts with the chaos of World War during which Lewis wrote his papers on Christian myth and his later books of *The Cosmic Trilogy*. In *Out of the Silent Planet* (1936) he begins constructing his great cosmic mythology. His hero is Elwin Ransom, a philologist who is kidnapped whilst on a walking tour and taken to Mars, known to its inhabitants as Malacandra. There he learns that the Martian society consists of *hrossa*, *pfifltriggi* and *séroni* (*sorns*), each species having different skills, and none being masters of the others. They are all reasoning creatures or *hnau*, although to be *hnau* also

means to have soul (see Lewis, 1989, p124). There are also invisible *eldila* whose presence can be sensed by the Martians. Ransom cannot see them, but learns to sense when they are near. To the *eldila* solid matter such as rocks and walls are 'like cloud' (Lewis, 1989, p83). All species pay homage to the planet's Oyarsa, who is the tutelary spirit of Mars and is also known as Malacandra. The *eldila* rule the *hnau* and the *hnau* rule the beasts (see Lewis, 1989, p91). Finally, above the entire Martian hierarchy, the Oyarsa Malacandra pays homage to Maleldil (God).

Lewis' mythologising of Mars builds upon mythology already extant thus, although he later acknowledged that he knew the canals on Mars to be an optical illusion, he still included them in *Out of the Silent Planet* because, 'they were part of the Martian myth as it already existed in the common mind' (Lewis, 2000, p457). Similarly his planetary Intelligence of Mars, known as the Oyarsa Malacandra, is recognised by Ransom in the second book as Ares from human mythology. Ransom learns the Martian language and is reluctant to leave his alien friends even though the planet's Oyarsa sends various signs that he should do so.

Colin Manlove notes that Lewis' trilogy moves not only beyond Earth to the planets but to 'the planets mythically conceived, (and) not those as science fiction knows them' (Manlove, 1992, p239). It is a sacramental mythologising of Mars that is in stark contrast to the vision espoused by H.G. Wells whose 'universe was peopled with horrors such as ancient and medieval mythology could hardly rival' (Lewis, 1989, p29). Instead Lewis confronts his hero with a race of Martians who are spiritually superior to the Fallen inhabitants of Earth. They are surprised to see Ransom because Earth is under siege, a blockaded and 'wounded world' suffering under the yoke of the Black Archon, also known as the Bent One or Satan. Centuries previously when the Black Archon fought the gods, he laid waste the surface of Malacandra, and now none can venture up onto the high ground known as the *harandra*. Instead life and vegetation exists in the low *handramits*. Ransom sees ruined cities up on the airless *harandra*. The *handramits* are not natural valleys as Ransom realises when he eventually begins his journey back to Earth. Instead they are 'gigantic feats of engineering' (Lewis, 1989, p129) that were carried out 'before human history began' (Lewis, 1989, p129). This history of Malacandra seems like mythology to Ransom, 'It even occurred to him that the distinction between history and mythology might be itself meaningless outside the

Earth' (Lewis, 1989, p129). The terrestrial distinction between myth and fact begins to be questioned in the first of the trilogy and is more overtly fused in the second. The *sorns* for example, have a 'wizard-like profile' (Lewis, 1989, p45), and the bodies of the *eldila* recalls 'Chaucer's "airish beasts"' (Lewis, 1989, p141), the shepherding of the *sorns* reminds Ransom of the trade of Homer's Cyclops. (For Lewis' treatment of myth and fact in the second book see my chapter on *Perelandra*.) Myth realised as fact on other worlds also occurs in the Narnia Chronicles and Lewis' short story 'Forms of Things Unknown', published after his death, in which Medusa is discovered on the moon.

In *Perelandra* (1943), Ransom is sent to Venus where a Fall is threatened through the visitation of the scientist Weston whose body is taken over by Satan on his arrival. In the preface to *Perelandra* Lewis rejects allegorical interpretation of the work's human characters (see Lewis, 1989, p147). Lewis strove not to limit his later creative works to one interpretative reading. Through denying allegory his characters become universal, not simply counterparts of the Christian story. Their struggles to find inner strength and overcome temptation are those played out in the lives of ordinary men and women whose dragons, though more mundane, still have to be vanquished to attain virtue, inner knowledge and choice of good over evil. In this light T.S. Eliot's concept of the 'mythical method' as an explanation of universalism in myth seems appropriate for the universalism Lewis sought, especially the internal approach which sees mythical characters as simultaneously universal men and women.

During the late 1940s and early 50s Lewis tried to re-affirm the importance of the spiritual and eternal as aspects of man submerged beneath the material, temporal and transient. He wrote 'Funeral of a Great Myth' around this time, developing his idea of 'the great Myth' (Lewis, 2000, p22) that first emerged in 'Is Theology Poetry?' and that was reiterated in 'Christian Hope - Its Meaning for Today' (1951-2). The great myth finds fertile ground when man extrapolates 'the imaginative and not the logical result of what is vaguely called "modern science"' (Lewis, 2000, p22). This is the kind of thinking that leads to the notion of popular evolutionism as distinct from the genuine scientific theory of evolution. The myth's antecedents are identified by Lewis in the imaginative fiction of H.G. Wells and Olaf Stapledon and, although he observed the myth's finest expression in Keats' *Hyperion*, Wagner's Wotan also exhibits this

particularly mythopoeic power for Lewis. He maintained that it is the great myth we should recognise in the story of life emerging from chaos and man rising to be a reasoning creature who eventually obtains godhead, only to be doomed to destruction when the universe succumbs to heat death in the distant future. Lewis rejected the word 'evolution' as too associated with change into 'better' forms of life (see Lewis, 2000, p25). A more protean sense of change may be more realistic since degeneration is statistically more probable according to Lewis. The great myth dominates attitudes and worldview, 'But the man who does see it, is compelled to reject as mythical the cosmology in which most of us were brought up' (Lewis, 2000, p28). Whilst Lewis wrote of the great myth that 'I shall always enjoy it as I enjoy other myths' (Lewis, 2000, p32) it is quite clear from his various writings that he did not. He certainly doesn't find Irish, Welsh or Christian myth so pernicious that they require warnings for the unwary. For Lewis, the great myth is an affliction that permeates many levels of human thought, 'The Myth obscures ... Great parties have a vested interest in maintaining the Myth' (Lewis, 2000, p31). He felt that the myth endures in science, politics, literature and must be countered by ensuring that the 'imagination (is) sternly subjected to intellect' (Lewis, 2000, p32), something Lewis seems to have tried with other myths too. Thus contrasting views on myth emerge at this time since there exists a gulf between Lewis' advocacy of the subjection of our intellect to God's Perfect Myth in 'Myth Became Fact' whilst he rejects man-made myth which he saw as pervading his own era in 'Funeral of a Great Myth'. The great myth infects people's thoughts and grows to threaten life and liberty in *That Hideous Strength* (1945). In this final book of Lewis' *Cosmic Trilogy*, the forces of God assemble at St. Anne's-on-the-Hill to counter the evil forces assembling at Belbury. Those at Belbury call themselves the N.I.C.E. or National Institute of Coordinated Experiments, and they want to prolong human life through artificial means. Their ideology is reminiscent of European fascists, as they seek to control the masses through lies and propaganda and a secret police force. The N.I.C.E. are prepared to use might and any means necessary to achieve their purposes.⁴² Lewis directed his readers to *The Abolition of Man* (1943) for his analysis of the social, scientific, religious and ethical problems that become the dominant themes of *That Hideous Strength*.

The gods or planetary intelligences from the earlier books of the trilogy descend on St. Anne's-on-the-Hill to support the cause of Ransom, who has returned from Venus with a wounded heel and now calls himself Mr Fisher-King. Jessie Weston notes the link between the wounded king and the wasted Land in various Arthurian tales (see Weston, 1993, pp. 12-24). In *Sone de Nansai* she observes that the Fisher King is Joseph 'd'Abarimathie who is punished for a sin against God with wounded loins and a curse upon his land of 'Lorgres' (see Weston, 1993, p22). In Lewis' novel the N.I.C.E. plan to turn the countryside into a wasteland and Ransom takes on the mantle of Pendragon, a leader on the side of 'Logres' (Lewis, 1989, p586) like king Arthur. In Charles Williams' *Arthuriana* Logres opposes Britain and Lewis retains this division in *That Hideous Strength* (see Lewis, 1989, p586). Arthurian legend and grail mythology are mixed with Lewis' interplanetary mythology set up in the earlier trilogy. For example, the power of the gods and the powers of Merlin are combined in *That Hideous Strength* in order to destroy the evil forces at Belbury. However this mixing of myths is a cause of tension in the structure of the work, further compounded by including pagan and Christian elements. Merlin is woken from a long slumber beneath Bragdon Wood and joins Ransom in the struggle against the N.I.C.E. but his powers are elemental, having a sympathy with nature, and represent 'the last trace of something the later tradition has quite forgotten about' (Lewis, 1989, p375). His magic comes from the lost age of the 'pre-glacial periods' (Lewis, 1989, p625). Ransom thinks that

Merlin's art was the last survival of something older and different - something brought to Western Europe after the fall of Numinor and going back to an era in which the general relations of mind and matter on this planet had been other than those we know (Lewis, 1989, p557).

During this lost age 'the Earth itself was more like an animal' (Lewis, 1989, p646) and Merlin is thus the 'last vestige of an old order in which matter and spirit were, from our modern point of view, confused' (Lewis, 1989, p647). This echoes the reduction of subject/object division that Barfield hypothesised in order to propose a more mythological use of language in the distant past of man (see above). In the Fisher-King's residence a bear and a cat are considered by Ransom who explains that their physical needs are less distinguished from their affections than is the case in man. Such distinctions are irrelevant to the bear or cat because in them what we encounter, Lewis

has Ransom explain to his followers, 'is one of Barfield's "ancient unities"' (Lewis, 1989, p621).⁴³ Humans are considered to have moved on from these undifferentiated mentalities. Other things than man inhabited that lost age, such as elves, dwarfs and water-people, and this notion of a past era of mythical creatures is used again most effectively in the Narnian Chronicle *Prince Caspian*.

The N.I.C.E. think that human history is something they can control, for them everything has been building up to the moment when they will guide human destiny. The populist notion of a Wagnerian peak in human destiny is criticised by Lewis in 'Historicism' (1950). He saw it as the kind of thinking that historicists exhibit when they claim to be able to see inner meaning in history. Lewis proposed that the fallacy of such thinking is that the pattern of history is too large for mortal man to grasp. Thus what historicists see is a myth instead of a real pattern (equating the term myth with lies). What little man can grasp provides an indeterminate object and 'The more indeterminate the object, the more it excites our mythopoeic or "esemplastic" faculties' (Lewis, 2000, p626). Whilst Lewis' intellectual powers were engaged in attacking 'the great Myth' of popular evolutionism and developmentalism that he called 'Wellsianity', his imaginative and myth-making powers were put to use countering materialist and reductivist mentalities through his own fictional mythopoeia.

In 'Hedonics' (1945) Lewis referred to the inner voice or 'wiseacre' as 'a sham realist ... (who) accuses all myth and fantasy and romance of wishful thinking: the way to silence him is to be more realist than he' (Lewis, 1996d, p63). Realist literature, in contrast, omits the wonder that man can derive from literature which, though fantastical, provides an experience most similar to the wonder we can perceive in real life. Lewis proposed that the mythopoeia of *Lord of the Rings* can lift 'the veil of familiarity' (Lewis, 2000, p524) and supply our jaded view of reality with a richer significance. For Lewis, elements of our mundane reality can be experienced afresh because 'By dipping them in myth we can see them more clearly' (Lewis, 2000, p525).

Lewis attempts to re-awaken his readers to the profound importance of cosmic reality in his theological fantasy *The Great Divorce* (1945). In this work, he defines the divide between holiness and sin, the sacred of God and the profane of the denizens of hell. The denizens of hell are burdened and tormented by their sins, they are ghosts and 'man-shaped stains on the brightness of that air. One could attend to them or ignore

them at will as you do with the dirt on the window pane' (Lewis, 1977c, p27). The protagonist's ghostly spiritual mentor is George MacDonald who advises that 'Hell is a state of mind ... every shutting up of the creature within the dungeon of its own mind - is, in the end, Hell. But Heaven is not a state of mind. Heaven is reality itself' (Lewis, 1977c, p63). The landscape of the afterlife is inimical to the ghostly remnants of souls who struggle to discard their blood and flesh mentalities in order to become solidified as spiritual forms, although only one succeeds in doing so. After a ghost discards a lizard from his shoulder the lizard, symbolising his corruption, is killed and both man and lizard become transformed. The man becomes angelic whilst the lizard metamorphoses into a horse. Having thus mastered himself and his sins the new spiritual being rides the horse until both become shooting stars, ascending the mountain and riding into 'the rose-brightness of everlasting morning' (Lewis, 1977c, p94). After this ascendancy the landscape sings about Lewis' with

the voice of that earth, those woods and those waters. A strange archaic, inorganic noise, that came from all directions at once. The Nature or Arch-nature of that land rejoiced to have been once more ridden, and therefore consummated, in the person of the horse (Lewis, 1977c, p94).

In contrast to the Nature of terrestrial existence this place has a Supernature.⁴⁴ This land is a more real reality than the shadow world of Earth. An entire reversal of worldview is required to appreciate that the soul and the spiritual life are what is eternal whilst our flesh and blood lives are the transient and ephemeral things that merely exist within sequential time. The afterlife guide, George Macdonald, explains this aspect of time and how humans retain freedom of choice within the interconnectedness of time as experienced in a series. 'Lewis' is given a vision of chessmen on a silver table overlooked by 'great presences that stood by' (Lewis, 1977c, p116). These are the immortal souls that watch whilst the chessmen they control are on the table and 'are men and women as they appear to themselves and to one another in this world. And the silver table is Time' (Lewis, 1977c, p116). Whilst the chessmen, *idolum*, or mimics move through time the huge forms remain motionless onlookers, thus outside serial time. This symbolic image contrasts man's eternal reality with his ephemeral aspect.

Lewis' image of Hell as urban streets, ordinary neighbours and the mundane echoes T.S. Eliot's poetic use of these themes whilst contrasting with Charles Williams'

use of the image of the city. For example, in Williams' Arthurian poems he used Byzantium as an image of 'the city'. Lewis identified this image with both hierarchy and Plato's notions of God and geometrical order (see Lewis, 1952a, p106). Williams was a Londoner and, whilst in Lewis' opinion London exhibited an impression 'of chaos' (Lewis, 1952a, p105), Lewis maintained that Williams 'looking on the same spectacle, saw chiefly an image - an imperfect, pathetic, heroic, and majestic image - of Order' (Lewis, 1952a, p105). In contrast to the 'clear and single image of Hell ... Heaven is both enormously "there" and yet not apprehended in one act of mind' (Manlove, 1987, p100). Lewis' image of Heaven thus retains an obscurity.

On 15th May 1945 Charles Williams died and, despite his grief at the loss of his friend, Lewis believed that 'his death has made my faith stronger' (Lewis, 1988a, p377). Lewis set about collecting together contributors for what eventually became *Essays Presented to Charles Williams* (1947), choosing to edit the tribute himself, as well as adding a Preface and chapter. Lewis also gathered Charles Williams' work into publishable form for *Arthurian Torso* (1948) which also contained a commentary on Williams' Arthuriana written by Lewis. Lewis found a fragment concerning the *Figure of Arthur* in which Williams explains that the 'theme is the coming together of two myths, the myth of Arthur and the myth of the Grail' (Williams, 1952a, p93). The poems thus exhibit a union of myths, as well as Williams' idiosyncratic use of imagery, all of which contributes to what Lewis called 'Williams's myth' (Lewis, 1952a, p100). In his commentary Lewis identifies Williams' portrayal of a 'cloud-landscape of the Welsh legends about Taliessin's birth' (Lewis, 1952a, p97). Taliessin is Arthur's singer/poet, to whose name Williams added an 's' from the spelling of the poet's name in *The Mabinogion*. For Lewis Williams becomes one of the 'refashioners of old myths' (Lewis, 1952a, p199). However, unlike most 'refashioners', Lewis maintained that Williams strove for a balance of elements that keeps 'true to the poet's originals' (Lewis, 1952a, p199). Through adopting this approach Williams allows the myths to retain their strengths and he avoids tensions that spoil other re-workings of myth,

All through *The Ring* the original Nibelungen story is pulling against the political and economic stuff with which Wagner wants to load it : all through Tennyson's *Idylls* the Arthurian story is pulling against nearly everything that

Tennyson wants to say. There is no such tension in William's{sic} *Arthuriad* (Lewis, 1952a, p199).

As noted previously, Lewis' reworking of myth in *That Hideous Strength* sets up a tension between the Christian Fisher King and the elemental sympathies of Merlin. Tensions are increased because both of these Arthurian elements pull against the cosmic myth of the gods and the 'great myth' of man willing his own destruction through the plans of N.I.C.E. (echoing Wotan in Wagner). However the problem of such tensions is less intrusive in the more seamless *Perelandra*.

The problem of tensions in myth refashioning also emerges in Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. In 1948 Lewis read the early chapters to Tolkien who disliked them. He later read them to Roger Lancelyn Green, an ex-pupil and friend, who felt Tolkien's dismissal to be premature. Green read the entire work during 1949 but considered the introduction of the mythical Father Christmas to be a fault, clashing with other mythical elements. Like the fauns, pans and satyrs, Father Christmas is mythical on Earth, however, all these figures are real in Narnia (see my chapter on *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*). Lewis went on to write six more Narnia books, *Prince Caspian* (1951), *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (1952), *The Silver Chair* (1953), *A Horse and his Boy* (1954), *The Magician's Nephew* (1955) and *The Last Battle* (1956). The order in which he wrote them is significant since in the two latter works, Lewis creates a more defined structure for his fantasy cycle in which each world is 'located' within levels of Platonic reality.⁴⁵ Thus in the final book the children ascend to new Narnias that exist in ever greater reality.

The Narnian stories retain an undeniable allegorical framework that has generated considerable critical debate because people either read them allegorically or by emphasising wider symbolic interpretation. The allegorist group include Tolkien, Huttar and Lindskoog,⁴⁶ whilst those emphasising symbol include Purtill, Hooper and Tixier.⁴⁷ In the same year that Lewis published *The Last Battle* (1956) he wrote a letter to Peter Milward, formerly a student of his, concerning allegory. In this correspondence, Lewis pointed out that for Tolkien a mythopoeic work is an art of sub-creation and thus 'more serious than an allegory' (Lewis, 1988a, p458). On the difference between allegory and myth he told Milward,

My view wd be that a good myth (i.e. a story out of which ever varying meanings will grow for different readers and in different ages) is a higher thing than an allegory (into which *one* meaning has been put). Into an allegory a man can put only what he already knows: in a myth he puts what he does not yet know and cd not come to know in any other way (Lewis, 1988a, p458){sic}.

We know from Lewis' comments on the function of myth in *An Experiment in Criticism* that 'after all allegories have been tried, the myth itself continues to feel more important than they' (Lewis, 1996b, p44). Despite his claim that myth is thus higher than allegory, there is a sense of him falling back into allegory in the Narnia books (see my chapter on *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*). The problem of the symbolic function of myth in Lewis' works needs further study, since whilst the writer tries to control myth, myth struggles to re-assert itself as a symbolic form. Re-evaluating Lewis' works through the philosophy of symbolic forms proposed by Ernst Cassirer will yield new understanding of the function of myth and symbol in the writings of both men.

The mid-1950s saw Lewis bring to fruition his immense academic study *Poetry and Prose in the Sixteenth Century* (1954), in which he attacked humanism and the way that scientific enlightenment changed the human worldview,

Man with his new powers became rich like Midas but all that he touched had gone dead and cold. This process, slowly working, ensured during the next century the loss of the old mythical imagination: the conceit, and later the personified abstraction, takes its place (Lewis, 1997, p4).

In this work Lewis sifts the plethora of prose and poetry of the 16th century, though generally excluding drama. We can see how he perceived the affect of humanism on the poetic and mythical imagination. For example, Sir Peter of Bearn's use of Acteon exhibits an 'unspoiled appetite for myth; there was no humanist meddler to tell them Acteon was "classical"' (Lewis, 1997, p155). In Lewis' definition of a humanist he proposed that they were

taught, or learned, or at least strongly favoured, Greek and the new kind of Latin; and by humanism, the critical principles and critical outlook which ordinarily went with these studies. Humanism is in fact the first form of classicism (Lewis, 1997, p18).

For Lewis humanism was ‘the most complete opposite ... to the Romantic desire for the primitive and the spontaneous’ (Lewis, 1997, pp. 23-24). He complained that ‘In our own age we have seen the sciences beating back the humanities as humanism once beat back metaphysics’ (Lewis, 1997, p31). In Lewis’ view the ‘humanistic temper’ (Lewis, 1997, p22) did not take a ‘delight in the myths as good “yarns”’. Myth interested these early classicists much less than it had interested Dante or Guillaume de Lorris or Chaucer’ (Lewis, 1997, p23).

Whilst researching for *Poetry and Prose in the Sixteenth Century* Lewis read the 1935 Italian translation of Ernst Cassirer’s *Individual and Cosmos in the Philosophy of the Renaissance* (German publication 1927), a work he goes on to recommend as among the ‘useful introductions to the imaginative temper of this century’ (Lewis, 1997, p603). He particularly took from Cassirer’s book the fact that ‘Cassirer has traced how the time-honoured truism that Man is a microcosm who has in him a bit of everything now underwent a strange transformation’ (Lewis, 1997, p12). Christians had the choice to be governed or not by reason within the framework of ‘the hierarchy of being’ (Lewis, 1997, p12) which posed limits on man. However the Florentines appeared to sometimes dispense with this limitation in a curious pre-figuring of Sartre. Lewis made extensive notes in the margins of the Italian translation of Cassirer’s work concerning the philosophers of the Renaissance, but these tell us little about his thoughts on the philosophy of Ernst Cassirer, usually referred to as the philosophy of symbolic forms. We can see the contrast between the approaches of Lewis and Cassirer for example where Cassirer observes that ‘*Buckhardt* called Pico’s oration one of the most noble bequests of the culture of the Renaissance’ (Cassirer, 1963, p86). Lewis has made a footnote commenting ‘Who cares about that? The question is whether it is true or false!’ (Lewis, 2002). The opening of Pico’s oration is quoted, describing ‘the end of creation - according to the myth with which Pico’s oration begins’ (Cassirer, 1963, p85) and Cassirer observes the way that man was formed ‘according to a general image that contained no particularities’ (Cassirer, 1963, p85). Man is within the hierarchy yet able to view it and have freedom within it in a way denied to beasts or angels. Above this section, in his Italian translation of Cassirer’s work, Lewis has written ‘But it is only Man (not beast nor angel) who can thus determine his own essence. Pico’s myth of the creation of Adam’ (Lewis, 2002).

During the late 1940s and early 1950s Lewis experienced problems in his private life. His brother suffered from depression and, subsequently, alcoholism. It was during this period that Mrs. Moore became seriously ill and died in 1951. Lewis' fame with *The Screwtape Letters* and apologetic writings impeded his academic career.⁴⁸ He corresponded with an American, Joy Gresham, on questions of faith and eventually met her in 1952. Their relationship deepened and resulted in marriage in 1956. With the Narnia Chronicles complete Lewis turned his creative energies to *Till We Have Faces* (1956), a prose retelling of the Cupid and Psyche myth and a work that Joy Gresham encouraged. This work saw the culmination of many of Lewis' theories and experiences of myth (for a detailed explanation see chapter on *Till We Have Faces*). However, soon after their marriage, Joy was diagnosed with cancer. Lewis looked after her two sons after Joy's death but his own health failed in 1957 and he found he had osteoporosis. He wrote *A Grief Observed*, published in 1961 under a pseudonym, in which doubt and fear assail the writer's faith whilst he attempts to reconcile himself to bereavement. Lewis' loss was a raw wound that affected his psyche. He again questioned the material versus the spiritual, and the nature of God and human existence. The notion of God as Good is refuted as a myth, a lie, and he denounces God as 'The Cosmic Sadist' (Lewis, 1966a, p27). However this bleak image of God is then re-assessed as 'more anthropomorphic than picturing Him as a grave old king with a long beard' (Lewis, 1966a, p27). The bearded old king 'image is a Jungian archetype. It links God with all the wise old kings in the fairy-tales, with prophets, sages, magicians' (Lewis, 1966a, p27). This image leaves the impression of 'something older than yourself, something that knows more, something you can't fathom. It preserves mystery' (Lewis, 1966a, pp. 27-28). Hope, dread, awe and the power to create are retained in the Jungian archetype whilst the image of God as the Cosmic vivisector suggests only a man who traps and baits. Lewis argues that too much in the world we experience and love is ignored by the reductive vivisector imagery. The problem for Lewis in *A Grief Observed* remains how to rationalise the scope of human greatness with what he saw as God's creation of 'that terrible oxymoron, a "spiritual animal"' (Lewis, 1966a, p61).

The chapter 'On Myth' in *An Experiment in Criticism* (1961) provides insight into Lewis' mature thought on myth. He proposed that the Orphean myth 'has a value in itself— a value independent of its embodiment in any literary work' (Lewis, 1996b,

p41). How the tale is related is not relevant provided the recipient of the myth is moved by it. What is important is that the Orpheus tale has an 'extra-literary quality' (Lewis, 1996b, p41), evoking what Lewis called 'the Event' (Lewis, 1996b, p41). The person moved by it does not necessarily have to read it in order to receive it, since what is imparted transcends any particular medium, a notion previously proposed in Lewis' Preface to *George MacDonald: an Anthology*, 'If some perfected art of mime or silent film or serial pictures could make it clear with no words at all, it would still affect us in the same way' (Lewis, 1996b, p41). We know from Lewis' visits to the opera⁴⁹ that he drew aesthetic experiences not only from reading about Norse myth and seeing illustrations, particularly Rackham's, but also from its musical interpretation. The operatic interpretations, particularly of *The Valkyrie*, left

images ... (that) remained with Lewis for years ... (even) irruptions in the natural world nearly always reminded him of one part of the *Ring* or another ... to lie in bed at night and revel in a Wagnerian storm thundering about the Kilns (Lewis' Oxford home) was an aesthetic experience' (Griffin, 1988, p94).

It is interesting to note Nietzsche's view that Wagner's '*The Ring of Nibelungen* is a massive thought system without the conceptual form of thought' (Nietzsche cited in Bowie, 1993, p228). In Lewis' Preface to *George MacDonald An Anthology* Lewis recognised that myth 'is in some ways more akin to music than to poetry or at least to most poetry' (Lewis, 1946b, px). The less conceptual and more imagist kind of thought is a fundamental aspect of myth,⁵⁰ it harks back to the earliest formations of myth emerging from the mental functions of primitive man, a theory proposed by Barfield and Cassirer.⁵¹ For Cassirer myth must be viewed as one of the 'spheres of symbolic expression' (Cassirer, 1955, p25).

In *An Experiment in Criticism* Lewis' proposed that the stories that an anthropologist would classify as myth do not necessarily have the extra-literary quality that he wanted to define in *Experiment in Criticism*. The reader may be appalled by the myths of ancient man, for their myths may be meaningless today, or cruel, obscene, silly and even insane. He described these myths as a 'rank and squalid undergrowth' (Lewis, 1996b, p42) out of which 'the great myths – Orpheus, Demeter and Persephone, the Hesperides, Balder, Ragnarok, or Ilmarinen's forging of the Sampo – rise like elms (Lewis, 1996b, p42). However Lewis' 'Event' is not limited to great myths. He

identified it with stories invented in fully civilised eras and thus suggested that whilst they are not myths in the anthropological sense they still have a 'mythical quality' (Lewis, 1996b, p42). For Lewis these include the plots of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, Wells's *The Door in the Wall*, Kafka's *The Castle*, the conception of Gormenghast in Peake's *Titus Groan* and the Ents and Lothlorien in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*.

Lewis proposed that in myth sympathy is lessened, and 'We do not project ourselves at all strongly into the characters. They are like shapes moving in another world' (Lewis, 1996b, p44). Thus our emotion for the characters is universal. Myth deals with 'impossibles and preternaturals' (Lewis, 1996b, p44) and retains affinities with fantasy. Myth also has a solemnity, whether joyful or sad, and it is 'not only grave but awe-inspiring' (Lewis, 1996b, p44). He felt it to be numinous.⁵²

Although Lewis explained that he was studying myth's affect upon the conscious imagination, and 'myths contemplated but not believed, dissociated from ritual, held up before the fully waking imagination of a logical mind' (Lewis, 1996b, p45), it is the unconscious, deeper sense that is evoked, for me, when he says that 'The story of Orpheus strikes and strikes deep' (Lewis, 1996b, p41). Similarly, in 'On Science Fiction' (1955), Lewis commented on the intensity of his response to mythopoeic fantasies, 'It would seem from the reactions it produces, that the mythopoeic is rather, for good or ill, a mode of imagination which does something to us at a deep level' (Lewis, 2000, p460). Jung's explanation, Lewis contended, fails because he produces 'one more myth which affects us in the same way as the rest' (Lewis, 2000, p459). Something less explicable, a deeper function of myth, remains for Lewis and it is in order to explore this deeper function that I propose to consider Lewis' works through the myth philosophy of Cassirer.

By July 1963 Lewis' health was deteriorating, probably through kidney failure. He needed the secretarial help of Walter Hooper, a young American to whom he had given an interview in June, to deal with the immense workload of letters and writing. Hooper had intended to write about Lewis but had arrived in time to see the writer through several heart attacks and a coma. Despite brief recoveries Lewis died at The Kilns on November 22nd 1963.

This overview of Lewis' life has sought to delineate the character of his thought on myth. He admitted that during his early life he was inwardly divided. One reason for this inner turmoil was because he drew aesthetic experiences from myth that he could not easily rationalise. His logical side wanted to grasp the intensity of these moments and subject them to introspective analysis. Both halves of his psyche eventually found common ground in Christian mythology. However, his wide-ranging writings have resulted in a diffuse message emerging from his attempts to understand myth and this has been compounded because myth retains inherent tensions. For example, in *An Experiment in Criticism* (1961) Lewis states that 'A myth means, in this book, a story' (Lewis, 1996b, p43). However, on the same page, he goes on to propose that 'Sometimes, even from the first, there is hardly any narrative element' (Lewis, 1996b, p43). In 'On Stories' (1947) he proposed that through the holistic power of story we can aspire to some aspect of the eternal, (for a more detailed explanation of 'On Stories' and myth see chapter on *Perelandra*). The problems and inconsistencies of Lewis' writings on myth are further compounded by myth's inexpressible quality.⁵³ It has an 'extra-literary quality' (Lewis, 1996b, p41) and no psychoanalytic or reductive explanation ever fully satisfied Lewis.

Despite these problems Lewis' writings have provided an enduring legacy to myth theory. As Duriez notes James Frazer's treatment of Christianity in *The Golden Bough* denied its uniqueness. Frazer wasn't interested in 'whether religions were true or false' (Duriez, 2000, p134). However, whilst 'the similarities between biblical teaching and ancient myths seemed devastating to Christian belief, C.S. Lewis came to the conclusion that they can argue for the truth of Christianity as well as against it' (Duriez, 2000, p134). Lewis' great essays using myth to argue for Christian belief would never have been written if Lewis had not submitted his emotions to exposure to, and rigorous self-reflection on, myth. He tried to grasp myth as a 'permanent object of contemplation' (Lewis, 1996b, p43) which extends beyond narrative sequential strictures to timeless gleams of celestial truth. In my view an element of mysticism thus emerges from Lewis' myth theoretics. When Lewis described the way he sought to trap 'the Object' (Lewis, 1977e, p136), induced by his early experiences of mythology, he believed that the Object was subjective and 'a mood or state within myself' (Lewis, 1977e, p137). To this end he sought out mythopoeic works that imparted the emotional

response, the 'Joy', followed by the longing, and each time he tried to 'taste' something beyond myth. He attributed this something to a higher reality, the gleams of which 'shone through' mythology and thus he concluded that the real source of 'Joy' was something outside the subjective self. However he seems to have remained in a state of inner division, having returned to the 'humiliation' of myth upon embracing the 'Perfect Fact' (Lewis, 1979a, p45) of Christ.

In the following chapter we shall see the ways in which Lewis' and Cassirer's views of myth both coincide and differ. Cassirer's main study of myth in *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. 2, *Mythical Thought*, arrives at the character of mythical thought by comparing the way it works with the way that logical or scientific thought functions. Thus Cassirer tried to illustrate what myth is and how it works in consciousness by observing its relation to, and contrast with, what it is not. He identified how the various modes of consciousness function very differently. From this chapter exploring Lewis' thought on myth we know that Lewis was torn between his rational, logical side and his poetic myth-loving propensity. These contrasting modes of thought form the inner tension at the heart of all Lewis' writings and reveal that, like Cassirer, Lewis was aware of this fundamental tension of his own conflicting thought processes.

Footnotes

- ¹ See Lewis, C.S., (1977e) *Surprised by Joy*, Fount, p64, p66, p106, p122, p137, p188.
- ² Lewis, C.S., (1977e) *Surprised by Joy*, Fount, p9 and pp. 22-23.
- ³ Lewis, C.S., (1977e) *Surprised by Joy*, Fount, p44.
- ⁴ Lewis, C.S., (1977e) *Surprised by Joy*, Fount, p14 and pp. 43-44.
- ⁵ According to Duriez, 'Tegner's *Drapa* (is) A poem by Esaias Tegner, translated by Longfellow' (Duriez, 2000, p196). However, this is both inaccurate (since it lacks the proper accent within the name Tegnér) and a misconception since it is really a poem by Longfellow about the encomium of Tegnér. In other words the poetical rendering by Longfellow of the death of Balder, the Norse god, is given a title that makes the whole thing a eulogy for Bishop Tegnér. Duriez' error perpetuates the kind of errors that Patterson has noted in the writings of Carnell, (see Patterson 1976 in Appendix).
- ⁶ Lewis' notion of *Sehnsucht* was also evoked by the Castlereagh Hills, visible from his family home although 'quite unattainable' (Lewis, 1977e, p12) and after seeing a toy garden built by his brother Warren which evoked sensations of bliss, longing and desire
Milton's "enormous bliss" of Eden ... comes somewhere near it ... before I knew what I desired, the desire itself was gone, the whole glimpse withdrawn, the world turned commonplace again ... It had only taken a moment of time; and in a certain sense everything else that ever happened to me was insignificant in comparison (Lewis, 1977e, p19).
He couldn't define these experiences as happiness or pleasure but knew they entailed longing and a desire for the experience of desire itself.

- ⁷ Cassirer commentator William Schultz observes that ‘Cassirer believes he as a philosopher can define myth because it has a tendency toward objectivization or world-making which is still in some sense a tendency of ours today’ (Schultz, 2000, p32).
- ⁸ See Lewis, 1996b, p47. Lewis describes his notion of the ‘Event’ in Lewis, C.S., (1961) ‘On Myth’ in *Experiment in Criticism*, Canto.
- ⁹ Lewis, C.S., (1977e) *Surprised by Joy*, Fount, p21.
- ¹⁰ For Northernness and *Sehnsucht* see Lewis, 1977e, pp. 64-66.
- ¹¹ *Dymer* (1926), ‘The Queen of Drum’, ‘The Nameless Isle’, and ‘Launcelot’.
- ¹² *The Pilgrim’s Regress* (1933).
- ¹³ According to Hooper ‘The battalion spent Christmas and New Year under heavy enemy fire at Woringham’ (Hooper, 1994, pxi, Introduction to *Poems* by C.S. Lewis).
- ¹⁴ For more comment on war and destruction see Lewis, C.S., (1977e) in *Surprised by Joy*, Fount, pp. 151-158, particularly pp. 157-8.
- ¹⁵ Ronald Bresland suggests there was more than duty involved in the relationship between Lewis and Mrs Moore (see Bresland, 1999, pp. 51-52).
- ¹⁶ Sayer identified the philosophies of F.H. Bradley and J. Cook Wilson as dominating Oxford during Lewis’ period of theistic indecision (see Sayer, 1997, p219).

- ¹⁷ Lewis, 1977e, p187. See also George Sayer's identification of Weldon's words in Sayer, 1997, p222.
- ¹⁸ For Steiner,
the Idea which Plato conceived and the like Idea which I conceive are not two ideas. It is one and the same idea. And there are not two ideas: one in Plato's head and one in mine; but in the higher sense Plato's head and mine interpenetrate each other; all heads interpenetrate which grasp one and the same idea; and this idea is only once there as a single idea. It is there; and the heads all go to one and the same place in order to have this idea in them (Steiner, 1911, pp. 27-28).
- ¹⁹ Lewis wrote the *Summae Metaphysica contra Anthroposophos*, (usually called "the *Summa*"), modelled after St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa contra Gentiles*, as his unpublished attack on Barfield's anthroposophy and Steiner's ideas of religion although this work was abandoned by Lewis upon his conversion to Christianity.
- ²⁰ See Lewis' Preface to *George MacDonald: An Anthology* (1946)
'On Stories' (1947)
'On Myth' in *An Experiment in Criticism* (1961)
- ²¹ In his letter to Barfield of June 1928, he also light-heartedly suggested "mythopoeics" (cf. "Metaphysics") but that leads to "a mythopoeician" wh. (which) is frightful: whereas "a mythonomer" (better still "The Mythonomer Royal") is nice' (Lewis, 1988a, p255).
- ²² Cassirer, 1955, p31.
- ²³ See Barnes, J., (1995) *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*, Cambridge University Press, p30.

Hume, Kant, Russell and Popper have all identified problems with induction, and Popper most succinctly points out the trap of assuming a false sense of security engendered by induction in *Objective Knowledge* (1974), see p98.

- ²⁴ Lewis' thoughts on Morris also appeared in his unsigned review of Dorothy Hoare's *The Works of Morris and of Yeats in Relation to Early Saga Literature* (see Hooper's identification of this unsigned review in Lewis, 1969, p231). Lewis' review of Dorothy M. Hoare's *The Works of Morris and of Yeats in Relation to Early Saga Literature* was published in *The Times Literary Supplement*, 29 May 1937, p409.
- ²⁵ See Lewis, 1969, p219. See also Sayer, 1997, p99.
- ²⁶ For 'substitution' see Williams, C., (1949) *Descent into Hell*, Eerdmans, p99.
- ²⁷ Lewis, 1982b, pp. 46-54. Lewis, C.S., 'The Novels of Charles Williams' (1949 B.B.C. radio talk) in *Of This and Other Worlds*, Hooper, W., (Ed.) Collins
- ²⁸ See Lewis, C.S., 'Psychoanalysis and Literary Criticism' (1942) in Lewis C.S., (1969) *Selected Literary Essays*, particularly p296, p299 and p300.
- ²⁹ Lewis found Bodkin and Tillyard's use of myth and imagery more agreeable than Freud's, see 'Psychoanalysis and Literary Criticism' (1942).
- ³⁰ Lewis' *Screwtape Letters* (1942) were first published in *The Guardian* each week and were a satirical exploration of the nature of sin and temptation in the medieval tradition of a devil battling for the soul.
- ³¹ 1941 also saw Lewis offered the chance to broadcast his thoughts on religion for the B.B.C.'s religious affairs department. His audience was 'estimated at 600,000 people a week' (Griffin, 1988, p191). Lewis was often forthright in his on-air discussions and received many letters in response.

- ³² A key part of Lewis' intellectual development involved his craving for argument. In late 1941 he was invited to form and become President of the Oxford Socratic Club, their first meeting being held on 26th January 1942. He was to forge new ideas from debate in the Club over which he presided from 1942-54. Besides his own varied addresses there tended to be seven or eight addresses by other notables each term. The Socratic Club followed Socrates' tenets of argument and was formed as 'an arena specially devoted to the conflict between Christian and unbeliever' (Lewis in Como, 1992, p138) and Lewis believed it to be the first forum ever to debate these kinds of issues in this way. Attendance generally was '60 and 100 members at every meeting' (Hooper, 1992, p140) although once there was in excess of 250. Although Lewis did not claim impartiality for these forums, since his vested interest was to counter attacks on Christianity, he did however claim that argument itself is impartial because, when allowed to follow through to its logical conclusion, it takes on 'a life of its own' (Lewis in Como, 1992, p139).
- ³³ The people who contributed papers and discussion to the Socratic Club included Austin Farrer, D.E. Harding, Dorothy L. Sayers, Iris Murdoch, Charles Williams, H.H. Price, Elizabeth Anscombe, J.B.S. Haldane (the biologist), and many others whom Lewis found in *Who's Who* and invited to defend their views in debate.
- ³⁴ See Hooper, W., 'Oxford's Bonny Fighter' in Como, J.T., (Ed.) (1992) *C.S. Lewis at the Breakfast Table*, Harvester.
- ³⁵ Lewis expressed similar concerns about Christ and the dying God myths in 'The Grand Miracle' (1945), observing that the Gospels scarcely recognise the association, despite the obvious allusion to the dying God being 'representative of the corn' (Lewis, 1971, p59) and Christ 'holding the corn, that is, bread, in His hand, and saying, "This is My Body" ' (see Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; I Corinthians 11:24 and Lewis, 1971, p59). Lewis also refers to the myths of dying and reviving gods in *Mere Christianity*, Bk. 2; and *They Asked For a Paper*, Chapter 9.

- ³⁶ Lewis, 1979a, p43.
- ³⁷ In his letter to Wayne Schumaker on 20th March 1962 Lewis commented on Milton, proposing that Milton's 'great success lies in practising the credal affirmation without losing the *quality* of myth. M {Milton} *does* this (for me) in Books XI and XII, I'm afraid' (Lewis, 1988a, p503).
- ³⁸ Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976) was a 'New Testament scholar ... (who) saw the gospel records as myths' (Duriez, 2000, p135). Whilst Bultmann wanted to 'demythologise' the gospels, viewing them as attempts to portray 'happenings in the world as having supernatural causes' (Duriez, 2000, p135), Lewis argued that the supernaturalist view helps 'intellectual discovery' (Duriez, 2000, p135). The approach of Lewis is to thus 'remythologize central Christian beliefs' (Duriez, 2000, p135).
- ³⁹ Lewis drew upon S. Alexander's theory of the enjoyment and the contemplation, see Lewis, 1977e, pp. 174-5.
- ⁴⁰ Barfield pointed out that the proposition that the Incarnation and Resurrection myth became fact was already widely realised by Anthroposophists, 'and had been so for years before Lewis's essay. It would be an accurate sub-title for Rudolf Steiner's book *Christianity as Mythical Fact*, published in German in 1902' (Barfield in Carpenter, 1997, p47). Barfield is probably referring to Steiner's *Christianity as Mystical Fact and the Mysteries of Antiquity* (1902). Carpenter notes that similar notions of pagan myth expressing an essence of fact have been expounded by G.K. Chesterton, see Chapter 5 of *The Everlasting Man*, and Austin Farrer, who explored Christianity as 'true' myth in his essay 'Can Myth Be Fact' in *Interpretation and Belief* (1976).
- ⁴¹ For hierarchy, see Lewis, 1998b, p9.

- ⁴² Recalling Lewis' attack on Nazi Odinists in 'Notes on the Way' (1942).
- ⁴³ See Lane, D., (1990) 'Resurrecting the "Ancient Unities", The Incarnation of Myth and the Legend of Logres in C.S. Lewis' *That Hideous Strength*' in *Mythlore*, No. 61, (Spring, 1990) Vol. 16, No. 3., and the comments in my Appendix.
- ⁴⁴ In *Arthurian Torso* Lewis noted Charles Williams' preference for the term 'Arch-nature' (see Lewis 1952a, p156).
- ⁴⁵ Joeckel, S. T., 'In Search of Narnia on a Platonic Map of Progressive Cognition' *Mythlore*, No. 83, (Autumn, 1997) Vol. 22, No. 1.
- ⁴⁶ For Tolkien's view of Narnia see Schofield, S., (Ed.) (1983) *In Search of C.S. Lewis*, Bridge Publishing Inc., p31.

Huttar, C. A., (1977) 'C.S. Lewis: Narnia and the Grand Design' pp. 119-135 in the *Longing for a Form: Essays on the Fiction of C.S. Lewis*, Schakel, P.J., (Ed.) The Kent State University Press.

Lindskoog, K., (1973) *The Lion of Judah in Never-Never Land*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans

- ⁴⁷ Purtill, R., (1974) *Lord of the Elves and Eldils: Fantasy and Philosophy in C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien*, pp. 92-94, Grand Rapids: Zondervan Corporation.

Hooper, W., 'Narnia - The Author, The Critics and The Tale' pp. 159-70 (particularly p110) in the *Longing for a Form: Essays on the Fiction of C.S. Lewis*, Schakel, P.J., (Ed.) The Kent State University Press.

Tixier, E., 'Imagination Baptised, or, "Holiness" in the Chronicles of Narnia' in the *Longing for a Form: Essays on the Fiction of C.S. Lewis*, Schakel, P.J., (Ed.) The Kent State University Press.

Matheson identifies the approaches of critics to the problem of allegorical or symbolic interpretation of Lewis' works. Matheson, S., 'C.S. Lewis and the Lion: Primitivism and the Archetype in the Chronicles of Narnia' *Mythlore*, No.55, (Autumn, 1988) Vol. 15, No.1. See also Appendix One.

Also, Marius Buning returns to the question of allegory in 'Perelandra Revisited in the light of Modern Allegorical Theory' in (1991) *Word and Story*, Schakel, P.J., and Huttar, C.A., (Eds.) Uni. Missouri Press. Buning questions Lewis' view of allegory expressed in *The Allegory of Love*.

48 Fame impedes Lewis' career, (see Griffin, 1988, p262).

49 In his childhood Lewis had listened to 'The Ride of the Valkyries' on record and had a 'musical experience ... (which) came like a thunderbolt' (Lewis, 1977e, p64). The music of Wagner induced an experience in Lewis unlike all other forms of music, (see Lewis, 1977e, p64). He went on to write an 'opera libretto ... *Loki Bound*' (Sayer, 1997, pp. 109-110) and suggested that Arthur Greeves should compose the music, however the project was never completed. Lewis attended the opera *The Valkyrie* on 16th June 1918. He saw the opera *Siegfried* with Barfield in 1932. In 1933 they went to see Wagner's *Das Reingold* at the Covent Garden Theatre, but found it less inspiring than *Siegfried* had been (see Lewis, 1993, p84). Lewis wrote to Charles Brady on 29th October 1944 proposing that 'The Wagner is important: you will also see, if you look, how *operatic* the whole building up of the climax is in *Perelandra*' (Lewis, 1993, p375). Interestingly, music and myth are compared in Susanne Langer's *Philosophy in a New Key* (1951).

50 Moorman, 1960, p8.

51 Barfield, 1988, Chapter 4, and Cassirer, 1955, p25. Both philosophers arrived at this view independently.

- ⁵² Lewis drew upon Rudolf Otto (1923) *The Idea of the Holy*, trans. John W. Harvey, London, for his notion of the Numinous as involving an ‘all-pervasive sense of the other’ (Duriez, 2000, p149). See the introduction of Lewis, C.S., (1940) *The Problem of Pain*. In ‘Is Theism Important?’ (1952) Lewis thinks Otto’s description of the Numinous to be the best available, but maintained that the Numinous is not ‘merely an affair of “feeling” ... We have in English an exact name for the emotion aroused by the Numinous, which Otto, writing in German, lacked; we have the word Awe ... I would find the seed of religious experience in our experience of the Numinous’ (Lewis, 2000, p56). However the word can also have the more limited sense of meaning ‘moments of mystical, or devotional, or merely numinous experience’ (Lewis, 2000, p57). The narrator of *Perelandra* encounters the numinous when ‘a bit of that world from beyond the world’ (Lewis, 1989, p159) breaks through and appears to his senses.
- ⁵³ Some of the inherent tensions of myth are noted by Duriez, see Duriez, 2000, p136.

2

C.S. Lewis, Ernst Cassirer and Myth

Born in Poland in 1874 Ernst Cassirer became Rector of the University of Hamburg, a position he left in the early 1930s during Hitler's rise to power. As a Jew in Germany during the rise of Nazism Cassirer opted for exile. In 1934/5 he accepted an invitation from Oxford to become a visiting lecturer at All Souls College, thus making it possible that C.S. Lewis knew him as a colleague, although I have found no evidence to suggest that they ever met. Cassirer went on to accept other posts, lecturing in both Sweden and America. It is through comparison of the myth writings of Lewis and Cassirer that significant areas of similarity and difference emerge. Cassirer was dedicated exclusively to writing theoretical philosophical works, whilst Lewis was also mythopoeic: a creative exponent of myth through fantasy. Cassirer's work exhibits an analytical distance, retaining an almost Brechtian quality of 'alienation'. In contrast Lewis wrote with a passion, his beliefs helping to forge his stance. Cassirer's writings show systemisation in his analysis whereas Lewis' reveals an eclectic body of knowledge developed in an apparently ad hoc way, often in response to debate, although the editorial control of Walter Hooper conducted after Lewis' death has imposed some organisation on his works. In contrast, from early on, Cassirer took a multi-disciplinary approach to his studies in order to develop an holistic understanding of man, drawing from biology, anthropology, phenomenology, religion, history, science, language and literature. He realised that movements, such as Darwinism and psychoanalysis, relied heavily upon empirical facts being stretched to fit a preconceived pattern. This led to an antagonism of ideas that Cassirer saw as a threat to man's ethical and cultural life. He attempted to bridge the boundaries between science, philosophy and theological anthropology in order to regain a conceptual unity from what was a disconnected and disintegrating mass of data. In comparison theology dominates Lewis' approach to human knowledge. Both were adept in various languages, including Latin and Greek, and could be described as polyglots. Lewis' expertise included philology,

literary history, literary criticism and Christian apology. Whilst Lewis was trained in, and briefly taught, philosophy (see previous chapter), Cassirer was a philosopher who created his own philosophy.¹ Both of these remarkably learned individuals came to recognise myth as an underlying force pervading all levels of human endeavour. No discipline is entirely devoid of some aspect of myth or mythical thought, and so we find them considering the influence of myth and mythical thought on diverse topics including number, science, theology and anthropology.² In 'Is Theology Poetry?' Lewis considered the myth-making attribute recognising that 'Man is a poetical animal and touches nothing which he does not adorn' (Lewis, 2000, p15). This sense of man's imaginative power emerges in Cassirer's view that myth remains an active element of mind.

In consideration of the primitive origins of man, Cassirer recognised that myth retains affinities with pre-linguistic communication. He proposed that myth is involved in the gradual delineation of self. This development of objective-subjective polarisation was recognised by both Cassirer and the philosopher Owen Barfield as emerging through language development. The study of the change of man through the etymology of words became the basis for Barfield's philosophy, and he praised Cassirer's work in this area, acknowledging that it is 'on the basis of an historical approach to language ... that Cassirer builds up his own theory of knowledge' (Barfield, 1966, p253).³ In his essay 'Lewis, Truth and Imagination' (1977) Barfield commented on the 'study of language in its historical aspect' (Barfield, 1989, p95) and maintained that 'Ernst Cassirer's *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* was a star of the first magnitude in a whole firmament of lesser lights' (Barfield, 1989, p95). Although working independently, both philosophers drew conclusions about myth from the study of philology (see previous chapter). Cassirer proposed that myth and language are both symbolic forms. In the distant past, myth and language were bound together.⁴ Similarly, religion and myth are almost inextricably interconnected back in early human history. For Cassirer a sense of fusion occurs the further back that we trace religious consciousness and mythical consciousness (see Cassirer, 1955, p79), seeing them as indistinguishable when looking to the early origins of consciousness (see Cassirer, 1955, p239). However, this intertwining of different modes of consciousness separates as consciousness progresses through time. Similarly for Lewis 'Paganism had been only the childhood of religion, or

only a prophetic dream' (Lewis, 1977e, p188). As an apologist Lewis saw the pagan myths as God influencing early man. The incarnation theme in pagan myth reminded Lewis of 'watching something come gradually into focus: first it hangs in the clouds of myth and ritual, vast and vague, then it condenses ... as a historical event' (Lewis, 2000, p16). For Cassirer the process whereby the different types of consciousness separate involves a change of worldview as man progresses from early, primitive mythical thought to the 'higher' kinds of thought associated with the formation of a religious worldview. However a contradiction emerges since the mythical consciousness looks upon a mythical symbol with a mythical characterisation whilst religious consciousness ultimately rejects the mythical (see discussion on the myth dialectic to follow). This has relevance for Lewis' fictions because he often used myth intrinsically within his works. However there is a tension in his use of pagan elements, such as pantheistic gods, which are remnants of polytheistic and more mythical world-views that contrast with his apologetic desire to promote the revelation of Christian faith. Christian faith is based upon the rejection of pagan gods and idolatrous images (this contradiction in Lewis' works is explored more closely in subsequent chapters). Myth and mythical thought present inherent contradictions, and these are addressed by Cassirer in his explanation of the workings of mythical consciousness especially in the symbolic function of myth and its apprehension of images (see below). There is a specific kind of apprehension and mental process involved in myth. Thus for Cassirer myth is fundamentally a symbolic form.

The symbolic forms identified by Cassirer include science, art, history, religion, language and myth.⁵ The philosophy of symbolic forms remains Cassirer's most profound philosophical achievement. He considered that the web of human experience becomes a symbolic net trapping man in his own thought processes which is why man cannot confront reality in an immediate sense. Physical reality recedes as symbolic activity advances, thus 'Instead of dealing with the things themselves man is in a sense constantly conversing with himself' (Cassirer, 1972, p25). We are all enveloped within artistic images, mythical symbols and religious rites and Cassirer observed that

Man has discovered a new mode of expression: symbolic expression. This is the common denominator in all his cultural activities: in myth and poetry, in language, in art, in religion, and in science' (Cassirer, 1974, p45).⁶

Cassirer proposed that we should thus redefine the Aristotelian view of man as *animal rationale* in order to recognise the more fundamental attribute of man as *animal symbolicum* and then we can begin to comprehend the specific mental faculties that led humanity to civilisation.⁷ Symbolism is pre-linguistic, its presence as a human mental activity is argued by Cassirer through the exploration of the work of Yerkes, Koehler, Pavlov and through the study of deaf-dumb-mute children Laura Bridgman and Helen Keller.⁸ It should be stressed that symbolism is viewed slightly differently for different systems. The symbolism to which Cassirer aspires for the basis of his philosophy involves symbolic thought and symbolic behaviour. He includes both the physiological and psychological in order to build up a holistic view of symbolism.⁹ There remains a great deal of debate as to how symbolism works in the various movements such as idealism, materialism, spiritualism and naturalism. However, whilst Cassirer develops his philosophy concerning myth from the view that symbolism is a principle and a process within the development of apes, anthropoids and the higher primates, such as man, Lewis adopts a supernaturalist view of symbolism as sacramentalism in *The Allegory of Love*.¹⁰ In Lewis' discussion of the changes of myth into allegory in classical poetry he suggests that the 'symbolist leaves the given to find that which is more real' (Lewis, 1958, p45). There had been a shift from myth into allegory, observed Lewis, and he identified this process operating in the works of the poets. For example, he explored the difference in the use of the mythological gods in Virgil's *Aeneid* in contrast with their incorporation and use in Statius' *Thebaid*. Applying the well-known phrase from Norse mythology to the fate of the Roman pantheon, Lewis pointed out that there was a 'twilight of the gods' (Lewis, 1958, p52) during which the gods' mythological trappings became denigrated into allegory. Thus Mars loses his mythological history in the *Thebaid* becoming more about the personification of rage for Statius.¹¹ Lewis is not discussing symbolism in art as something merely aesthetic but draws conclusions from the works of the ancient poets in order to highlight how allegories were used to portray 'state(s) of mind' (Lewis, 1958, p53). Thus Lewis is attempting to reflect through a literary phenomenon 'the whole mental life of the period' (Lewis, 1958, p57). For Lewis the 'allegorization of the pantheon ... depend(s) on causes that go beyond merely literary history' (Lewis, 1958, p58) and whilst he

concluded that ‘allegory is a mode of expression’ (Lewis, 1958, p48) he identified symbolism as ‘a mode of thought’ (Lewis, 1958, p48).¹²

In Cassirer’s philosophy symbolism has a profound importance because it is recognised as truly fundamental to the mental activity of man, ‘symbolic thought ...(endows man with) the ability constantly to reshape his human universe’ (Cassirer, 1972, p62). Without the symbolic activity of our thought Cassirer argued ‘Man’s life would be confined within the limits of his biological needs and his practical interests; it could find no access to the “ideal world” which is opened to him from different sides by religion, art, philosophy, science’ (Cassirer, 1972, p41). Cassirer equated this entrapment with those held in Plato’s imprisoning cave notion. Cassirer’s commentator James Gutmann explains that to understand Cassirer’s notion

of man as *animal symbolicum* requires ... consideration of Cassirer’s use of mythopoeic data. Cassirer traced the relation of myth to speculative thought from Plato and neo-Platonism to such modern writers as Gambattista Vico, Hölderlin and Schelling (Gutmann, 1949, p448).

Hölderlin opposed eighteenth century thinkers who denied the value of myth but Cassirer observed that Hölderlin was not systematic in his thinking.¹³ Schelling recognised myth as an impervious fundamental force within every culture and it fell to Schelling to be the first to propose a systemised myth philosophy.¹⁴ These thinkers considered that mythical mentalities suggest something beyond allegory or metaphysics although each viewed the symbolic function of myth differently. Schultz observes that in Cassirer’s philosophy ‘a mythical symbol implies a value distinction ... An example is the distinction between day and night, light and darkness, which is transposed into myths with the expressive value of goodness and evil’ (Schultz, 2000, p59) {see Cassirer’s *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* II, p96}. Lewis noted such a value distinction in the work of the 16th century poet Edmund Spenser who was ‘endlessly preoccupied with such ultimate antitheses as Light and Darkness or Life and Death’ (Lewis, 1958, p313). For Cassirer this antithesis of light and darkness is a dominant power which exerts its influence ‘on the mythical consciousness (and) can be followed down to the most highly developed religions’ (Cassirer, 1955, p96). He suggested that the religion of the Iranians can be viewed as the systemisation of this one opposition and also that the Cora Indian religion is dominated by the light and darkness opposition. For Cassirer this

opposition is ‘one of the latent factors in the religious structure of the cosmos’ (Cassirer, 1955, p96). Lewis saw this opposition¹⁵ in Spenser as suggesting that ‘what lies next beneath the surface in Spenser’s poem (*F.Q.*) is the world of popular imagination: almost, a popular mythology’ (Lewis, 1958, p312). He saw it as a world that Spenser evoked

for the sake of something yet deeper which it brings up with it and which is Spenser’s real concern; the primitive or instinctive mind, with all its terrors and ecstasies - that part in the mind of each of us which we should never dream of showing (Lewis, 1958, p312).

Lewis explores such instinctual mentalities in the mythical intuitions of the people of Glome in *Till We Have Faces, A Myth Retold*. They worship the primitive stone goddess Ungit in the darkness of an earth mound. The character Orual allows her irrational fear of the gods to consume her when she persuades her sister Psyche to use a lamp to reveal her husband, ‘This thing that comes to you in the darkness ... and you’re forbidden to see it. Holy darkness, you call it. What sort of thing? Faugh! it’s like living in the house of Ungit. Everything’s dark about the gods’ (Lewis, 1978b, p133). There is a value distinction at work here, as Lewis gives a sacral significance to the aura about the gods and this aura permeates Orual’s attitude to light. Orual fears the gods. The very notion of living ‘among things you can’t see’ (Lewis, 1978b, p134) is, for Orual, ‘dark and holy and horrible’ (Lewis, 1978b, p134). Orual cannot understand why Psyche’s husband should visit her only in ‘darkness and forbade itself to be seen’ (Lewis, 1978b, p161). She convinces herself that getting Psyche to light the lamp when her husband sleeps will reveal a ‘thing’ (Lewis, 1978b, p178) not a ‘real god’ (Lewis, 1978b, p178). The truth imparted by the myth of Cupid and Psyche, the myth from which Lewis derived the broad pattern of events for his retelling in *Till We Have Faces*, lies in the fact that love is something in which people believe even though it cannot be seen with their eyes. Psyche is thus being educated into a spiritual love because ‘faith ... by definition is “not sight”’ (Lewis, 2000, p57; the words of Christ in Matthew 6:22 may also shed light on this episode in Lewis’ novel, see also my chapter on *Till We Have Faces*).

Advancing from Kantian philosophy, and with inspiration from such thinkers as Goethe, Hegel, Herder and Montesquieu, Cassirer positioned his approach to myth

above the old dismissive view of myth as something mankind had passed beyond. Thus Itzkoff observes that Cassirer

did not necessarily subscribe to the idea that mythic thought involved a unidirectional phase in the history of man. It was a logical category that was supported by empirical evidence in anthropology and the psychology of human development (Itzkoff, 1977, p132).

This is one of the inherent contradictions of myth, that it is something that mankind has emerged from whilst it also remains a part of modern mental faculties. Although Itzkoff notes that Cassirer recognised myth as a root stage leading to an intellectual threshold beyond which lay ‘those important symbolic realms of higher thought’ (Itzkoff, 1977, p132), his philosophy elevates the study of myth to a modality of thought, an expression of man, and a form of the consciousness, just as science, language, art and religion can also be viewed in this way. Thus Cassirer proposed that

Myth is one of the oldest and greatest powers in human civilization. It is closely connected with all other human activities - it is inseparable from language, poetry, art and from early historical thought. Even science had to pass through a mythical age before it could reach its logical age: alchemy preceded chemistry, astrology preceded astronomy (Cassirer, 1974, p22).

For Lewis this sense of emergence from a ‘mythical age’ has a profound religious significance since he maintained that the dying and reviving god myths reflect ‘a *preparatio evangelica*, divine hinting in poetic and ritual form at the same central truth which was later focused and (so to speak) historicized in the Incarnation’ (Lewis, 1996d, p91). As he wrote to his friend Arthur Greeves, pagan stories of ‘the dying and reviving god (Balder, Adonis, Bacchus) ... are God expressing Himself through the minds of poets, using such images as He found there’ (Lewis, 1993, p289; Lewis’ brackets). Charles Hendel observed that whilst Cassirer acknowledged the notion of a ‘mythical age’, he goes on to pose the question of whether myth and magic are phenomena that should necessarily be

regarded as merely primitive, as imperfect versions of forms which supplant them in the rational and civilised mode of existence - magic giving up the ghost as it were to science, and myth passing into religion? (Hendel, 1955, p44).

In Cassirer's philosophy he deals with the question of whether myth has a discoverable function and logic of its own, seeing this as a way to explain its persistence as a pervading force in modern civilisations and culture. However the notion of myth having a 'logic' must be treated with caution¹⁶ because, whilst Cassirer went on to show that 'myth has an inner logic or form' (Schultz, 2000, p8; see also Cassirer, 1955, Vol. 1, p81), this is not 'logic' in the sense of thought being governed by the laws of reason and rationality, 'Its logic ... is incommensurate with all our conceptions of empirical or scientific truth' (Cassirer, 1972, p73). Thus when Cassirer examined primitive mythical mentalities he found himself confronted by 'not a logical, but a "prelogical" or a mystic mind. Even the most elementary principles of our logic are openly defied by this mystic mind' (Cassirer, 1974, p11). Indeed the Cassirian view of myth's inner 'logic' or form is more like 'a pattern, or common way' (Schultz, 2000, p8). Perhaps it is less misleading to say that mythical ideas exhibit a kind of commonality of relation. One of the traits of mythical thought observed by Cassirer is that external and internal characteristics are not sharply distinguished but instead merge towards essence. This merging of the prelogical mind with its environment recalls Barfield's notion of reduction in the subjective/objective divide in the antique world.¹⁷ Unlike the world of objective differentiation, Cassirer saw that something radical is revealed in mythical consciousness. Whilst the process described for empirical thought is 'intrinsically dialectical' (Cassirer, 1955, p33) for mythical thought to occur something apparently anomalous takes place. The logic of testing and verification breaks down and, as noted in my previous chapter, there is not the dialectical movement of thought, in the Aristotelian sense of particulars rising to a universal. Instead consciousness succumbs to the momentary 'presence' of an impression (see Cassirer, 1955, p35). For Cassirer, in mythical consciousness there is not the distinction between 'spheres of objects' or the realisation of truth and appearance (ibid., p35) and instead myth 'lives' in the intensity and presence of its object, and this affects consciousness as a kind of seizing or possession occurring 'in a specific moment' (Cassirer, 1955, p35). Similar experiences of momentary subordination to the impression of myth were recorded by Lewis in his autobiography (see previous chapter). On the face of it this function of myth appears to be at odds with Lewis' discussion of myth as 'a particular kind of story' (Lewis, 1996b, p41) since story suggests duration and Cassirer saw myth

as having no power to extend the moment. However, Lewis recognised that myth as story doesn't work like ordinary stories. The difference lies in the importance of the pattern of events and the holistic power imparted by myth as story which is emphasised in Lewis' contemplation of myth as an object. In my previous chapter I noted the ways that Lewis considered imagination to be disposed, one of which being that 'It loves to embrace its object completely, to take it in at a glance' (Lewis, 2000, p11). This type of imaginative embracing seems to echo the way that Cassirer describes the subordination to the object in mythical consciousness. Mythical thought embraces the object in a similarly holistic way. So although Lewis talks about myth as story, he also claims that narrative can be minimal, 'The idea that the gods, and all good men, live under the shadow of Ragnarok is hardly a story. The Hesperides, with their apple-tree and dragon, are already a potent myth, without bringing in Herakles to steal the apples' (Lewis, 1996b, pp. 43-44). Similarly the very titles of William Morris' works exerted a mythical power upon Lewis, before he had even read the stories (see Lewis, 2000, p503) and so did the word Atlantis (see Lewis, 2000, p503) and mythological paintings. This indicates that mythical thought operated upon Lewis' imagination and, this being the case, Cassirer's philosophy can help us to a deeper understanding of these kinds of distinctions and tensions in the way that myth functions. The treatment of myth and mythical thought in Lewis' stories (his own myths) is thus explored through the application of Cassirer's myth theoretics to three case studies in subsequent chapters, in order to identify myth as a symbolic form in Lewis' works and to reveal the operation of mythical thought in his fictions. The choice of each test case example has been determined by the need to attempt to cover the different genres of Lewis' fictional works, drawing on the best of his science fiction, pseudo-historical novel and children's fantasy works. Clearly the theories demonstrated could be applied not only to the remaining Lewis' fictions but also to the works of other mythopoeic authors. Thus a new way of reading mythical fantasy literature results from this pioneer study.

However, before going further, another apparent contradiction needs to be addressed. Although Cassirer rejected the Aristotelian dialectic when considering the operation of mythical thought, he did observe its 'inner form' (Cassirer, 1955, Vol. 1, p81) and 'peculiar "logic"' (Cassirer, 1996, p68) or relational nature. Thus there is a system involved in mythical thought and this is explained by Cassirer through his theory

of the 'Dialectic of the Mythical Consciousness' (Cassirer, 1955, p235). This 'dialectic' involves 'the relation of myth toward its own image world' (Cassirer, 1955, p236). What happened when people progressed from mythical consciousness to a pure form of religious consciousness involved a profound change of world-view and that change can reverse all the value distinctions placed upon the image by mythical thought. Cassirer's dialectic of myth thus defines 'the orientation of mythical thought from its beginning to the point at which the world view changes' (Schultz, 2000, p172). This will become clearer when we consider how Lewis sought to bring his character Orual, in *Till We Have Faces*, out of the limitations of a mythical thought-orientated society and world-view into greater self consciousness and a new relation to God. However, at this point it is important simply to realise that there are levels of mythical thought, and that these rise in complexity, sometimes having apparently contradictory two-fold movement, until the crisis of religion means that the limits of myth are surpassed.¹⁸

Differentiating the approaches to myth made by Lewis and Cassirer, in order to draw some pertinent comparisons, we can see that whilst Cassirer sought a 'unity in the manifold' (Cassirer, 1974, p37)¹⁹ in order to make comprehensible myth's 'widely divergent and (often) entirely incompatible phenomena' (Cassirer, 1974, p37), Lewis' myth writings initially appear resistant to a unity because they are very eclectic. However, although Lewis did not set out to specifically develop a comprehensive myth philosophy from the outset, instead building up his ideas on myth over the course of his life and through debate (see previous chapter), a sense of unity does emerge in Lewis' view of myth as operating through man's poetic imagination. Whether he's considering number, the creation of a great myth or the mythical radiance resting on theology, Lewis maintains that it is always the imagination that myth calls into play. The central difference between these two men is that the power of myth can come from without, from God, for Lewis, whilst in Cassirer's writings there is less of a theistic intention. Even so Cassirer cannot discuss thought, mind and knowledge without bringing in the term spirit (*PSF* I, p61), or *geist*, but sees this as subtly different to 'soul' and in some ways correlative to life.²⁰ Cassirer is mainly concerned with the phenomena of man's mind operating upon the concrete sensual data presented to its inner subjective realm. Thus for Cassirer myth and religion are more about the expressive function of man, not with an outside God working on or through man.²¹

Cassirer was not trying to explain myth reductively as allegory, or as sexual or subconscious drives, or even reducing it to a rational power,²² but instead he was attempting to assess it as a transcendental process that raises human mental faculties. In this stance Cassirer's writings agree with Lewis who also opposed reductive approaches to myth (see Introduction and previous chapter). Allegory, psychoanalysis, euhemerism, are all approaches that contribute to myth. However, after they have been considered, myth continues 'to feel more important' (Lewis, 1996b, p44) and the 'important something' (Lewis, 1996b, p45) still remains for Lewis. Cassirer also rejected such 'narrow' views of myth, and, as we similarly find in Lewis' later writings on myth, we can see that Cassirer finds these kinds of explanations of myth to be based upon a false premise. For Cassirer 'Linguists, anthropologists, ethnologists had offered their several theories of myth. All these theories were useful to illuminate a certain sector of the problem; but they did not cover the whole field' (Cassirer, 1974, p28). In comparison one must further reflect on Lewis' statement,

I believe that in the huge mass of mythology which has come down to us a good many different sources are mixed - true history, allegory, ritual, the human delight in story telling, etc. But among these sources I include the supernatural, both diabolical and divine (Lewis, 1996d, p91).

Lewis believed in a worldview that incorporated the supernatural, and this factor characterises his view of myth. Lewis commentator Colin Duriez asserts that 'Myth can be defined in terms of the symbolic capture or embodiment of a worldview of a people or culture, thus having an important believed element' (Duriez, 2000, p136). When considering Tolkien's sub-created world of middle-earth Lewis proposed that 'A myth points, for each reader, to the realm he lives in most. It is a master key; use it on what door you like' (Lewis, 2000, p521). Whilst critics may try to argue that Lewis reduces myth to religion Lewis would counter this accusation by explaining that his approach is in fact transcendental.²³

The main way that Cassirer approaches myth is to consider its operation as a mode within human consciousness, hence he postulated a mythical consciousness. In *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. 2, *Mythical Thought* (Germany 1925), Cassirer developed 'a philosophical analysis of the form of myth' (Cassirer, 1955, pxiv).²⁴ All sections of study in the book are fundamentally based upon Cassirer's understanding of

mythical consciousness. Some twenty years later, in Preface to *George MacDonald: an Anthology* (1946), Lewis also identified myth as a different mode of consciousness (see below). Cassirer, however, took the step of analysing myth by using phenomenology to delineate the characteristics and operations of mythical thought within consciousness.²⁵ Phenomenological analysis places a primacy on the importance of consciousness, seeing less importance, analytically, in that which lies outside immediate experience. In *Introduction to Phenomenology* (2000) Dermot Moran maintains that ‘Phenomenology ... emphasises the attempt to get to the truth of matters, to describe the *phenomena* ... as it manifests itself to consciousness’ (Moran, 2000, p4). Lewis also recognised myth’s affect on consciousness.²⁶ Both Lewis and Cassirer thus recognised the importance of myth’s operation in consciousness. In the essay ‘Is Theism Important?’ (1952) Lewis, possibly unwittingly, echoes Husserl when claiming that ‘nothing can be described except in terms of its effects in consciousness’ (Lewis, 1996d, p159). Edmund Husserl was the German founder of modern phenomenology, and a contemporary of Cassirer and Lewis, who proposed an intentional consciousness theory in which ‘All consciousness is consciousness of something: in thinking, I am aware that my thought is “pointing towards” some object’ (Eagleton, 1996, p48).²⁷ The construction of objects in the mind and their correspondence to those in the physical domain is recognised as important for suggesting our relationship to reality for many writers and philosophers including Kant, Husserl, Cassirer, Barfield and Lewis.²⁸ Duriez points out that ‘If it is true that myth plays a part in a symbolic perception of reality (which Lewis believed), then there is an inner connection between myth and the real world of sensible things and events’ (Duriez, 2000, p137; Duriez’ brackets). Cassirer saw myth as involved, to various extents, in all inner operations of consciousness. We couldn’t build up our world-view without its active function. Something of our inner mental domain is thus made concrete when revealing the power of myth. Subject/object division is reduced, and there are fewer barriers to the various factors that help build the holistic object in consciousness.²⁹ Cassirer criticised the many and varied attempts made to ‘intellectualise myth’ (Cassirer, 1972, p81) claiming that attempts to explain myth ‘ignored the fundamental facts of mythical experience’ (Cassirer, 1972, p81). From adding this factor to his study Cassirer could build a more holistic picture of myth, identifying it as ‘the *expression* of emotion’ (Cassirer, 1974, p43).

In *An Experiment in Criticism* (1961) Lewis stated that his intention is to describe myths 'as we experience them' (Lewis, 1996b, p45). I believe this must be viewed with some caution because, as Lewis revealed in 'Religion Without Dogma?' (1946), the experience certainly differs to a greater or lesser extent for every individual. Lewis particularly possessed a unique insight into myth gained from his immense reading and study of myths and mythopoeic literature. From his diverse comments it is clear that we can only really be certain about the affect that myth had chiefly upon Lewis. Lewis attempted to define what myth is in Preface to *George MacDonald: an Anthology*, but instead his comments are more revealing about what myth meant to him. He considered that myth

goes beyond the expression of things we have already felt. It arouses in us sensations we have never had before, never anticipated having, as though we had broken out of our normal mode of consciousness and "possessed joys not promised to our birth." It gets under our skin, hits us at a level deeper than our thoughts or even our passions, troubles oldest certainties till all questions are re-opened, and in general shocks us more fully awake than we are for most of our lives (Lewis, 1946b, px).

Lewis thus embraced myth as an experiential force that could change his mode of consciousness. Myth changed the medium of his thoughts, as though exchanging swimming for flying. Where before he slept, through myth he is shocked awake and felt more alive. Myth made Lewis experience new sensations, it brought out feelings in him. Similarly, for Cassirer the very basis of myth is 'a substratum ... of feeling' (Cassirer, 1972, p81). In 'Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's To Be Said' (1956) Lewis says that the mythical mode 'can give us experiences we have never had and thus, instead of "commenting on life", can add to it' (Lewis, 1966b, p38). A sense 'living participation' (Cassirer, 1996, p30) emerges in Cassirer's view of the way that myth as 'the expressivity of the world ... involves its (the world's) metamorphosis, its transformation into an image' (Cassirer, 1996, p30). Cassirer considered that the resulting image emerges through the 'complicity of the energies of the perceiver' (Cassirer, 1996, p30). In Cassirer's theoretics of primitive mythical apprehension all life is felt to have a unity. Orgiastic dances, cults and rituals serve to bring man into 'an immediate union' (Cassirer, 1955, p189) with the 'natural process' (Cassirer, 1955,

p189) or restored sense of 'identity with the original source of life' (Cassirer, 1955, p189). Again feeling and experience fundamentally characterise this operation of myth. Barfield recognised that 'Lewis was deeply interested in myth, deeply aware of it as an important element in human experience' (Barfield, 1989, p71).

When considering Lewis' writings on myth we have to remember that he actively encouraged the experience³⁰ of myth and fashioned stories that evoke the mythical quality. Ultimately he used its experiential qualities to transcend the limitations of his youthful thought and develop an appreciation of the spiritual and mystical.³¹ Lewis acknowledged that he was actively engaged in the immersion of myth, 'I have been reading poems, romances, vision-literature, legends, myths all my life. I know what they are like' (Lewis, 1998b, p90). This intimacy with myth suggests the suitability of his works for a reading from a Cassirian perspective because Cassirer maintained that a false view emerges from mere reflection upon myth, what is required for true comprehension is to 'live in it' (Cassirer, 1955, p38). In the previous chapter we observed Lewis' realisation that being in an experience and reflecting upon it are generally exclusive mental activities. However he concluded that myth partially overcomes this problem, bringing closer to the concrete what is usually abstract.³² In 'Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's To Be Said' (1956) Lewis says that 'The Fantastic or Mythical is a Mode ... it has the same power: to generalize while remaining concrete, to present in palpable form not concepts or even experiences but whole classes of experience' (Lewis, 1966b, p38). Cassirer was also faced with the problem of either being in an experience or reflecting upon it when writing about myth as a symbolic form. He overcomes this by basing his research on a phenomenological investigation of myth, by attempting to study myth as those within it experienced it. Although most critical techniques cannot avoid abstraction, critical theorist Terry Eagleton points out that 'the aim of phenomenology was in fact the precise opposite of abstraction: it was a return to the concrete' (Eagleton, 1996, p48).

The Enlightenment philosopher Kant had paved the way for phenomenology with his work on pure reason and outer senses, concepts, categories and antinomies. In Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (2nd edition 1787) he asserted 'That all our knowledge begins with experience there can be no doubt' (Kant, 1964, p25). However Kant realised that 'empirical knowledge' (Kant, 1964, p25) is built up from both

‘impressions, and that which the faculty of cognition supplies from itself’ (Kant, 1964, p25). Kant’s work thus forces a re-evaluation of what we consider to be the ‘real’ nature of objects, both in the mind and in the outer realm. He saw that the distinction between reality and appearance is empirical; a rainbow offers merely appearance but inherently rain is considered as a ‘thing’. However closer examination suggested to Kant that not only are the drops of rain mere appearances, but that even their round shape, even the space in which they fall, are nothing in themselves, but merely modifications or fundamental forms of our sensible awareness, and that the transcendental object remains unknown to us.³³ This has important implications when considering Lewis’ approach to myth because, as can be seen from my previous chapter, he treated myth as an object through which transcendental reality shines. For Lewis the first hearing of a myth introduces ‘us to a permanent object of contemplation - more like a thing than a narration’ (Lewis, 1996b, p43). The word contemplation suggests meditation, thought, those leading the religious life of contemplation as opposed to the active, physical one. However, what myth puts into our minds involves something less like narration than a thing, something more concrete and sensual than inner and abstract.

For both Lewis and Cassirer there is a distinction between the character of myths from ancient eras, the older mentalities and world-views, to the created kind, whether that creation is by Plato³⁴ or an author such as Tolkien.³⁵ At the risk of some contradiction, it is important to note the distinction, made by Cassirer, that ‘the images in which ... (Genuine myth) lives are not *known* as images. They are not regarded as symbols (by those under the power of myth) but as realities’ (Cassirer, 1974, p47). Genuine myth is, for Cassirer, a different variety of myth to those myths ‘made by individuals’ (Cassirer, 1974, p47). As an example he cites ‘the famous Platonic myths’ (Cassirer, 1974, p47) maintaining that the difference between those of the individual and those inspired by social experience lies in the fact that ‘one of the most essential features of the genuine myths is missing. Plato created them in an entirely free spirit; he was not under their power, he directed them according to his own purposes’ (Cassirer, 1974, p47), purposes that are concerned with ethics and reason. In contrast, man has to accept genuine myth in a passive way. However there is, for Cassirer, a correspondence between both types of myth in that the emotions that they come from are intuited and ‘turned into images’ (Cassirer, 1974, p47). These images provide an interpretation of

nature, the biological, and man's 'inner life' (Cassirer, 1974, p47). Instincts, hopes and fears are all expressed in myth and 'mythical symbolism leads to an objectification of feelings' (Cassirer, 1974, p45).

Although myth is generally viewed as a preterlogical phase from which we have moved onwards and upwards into 'modern thought' with its scientific rationale, in Cassirer's philosophy, whilst mythical thought dominated human development in ancient eras, it has also remained an active part of modern consciousness. Nowhere was this to be more obviously displayed than in the fear driven mentalities resulting from the German Nazi propaganda machine. The historical context of World War II profoundly shaped both Lewis' and Cassirer's attitudes to myth. In my previous chapter we saw how Lewis' views on myth changed dramatically after his conversion. He went from having a materialist, rationalist view of reality, placing an importance on the power of logic, to realising that the myths (particularly dying and reviving god myths) and mythopoeic works (especially MacDonald's) that he had enjoyed all his life were a way to access religion, greater reality, and ultimately to help him towards belief in Christ. Lewis maintained that he appreciated the beauty of great myth.³⁶ He used myth to obtain higher levels of consciousness, to come to terms with his own spirituality and to transcend the limitations of logic, accepting that logic ultimately falters through a dearth of data. Since myth has such a central importance for all Lewis' thought, clearly we need new ways to read his works that involve a re-definition of normative reading strategies. We have to understand how myth works before we can understand how Lewis' myths, his own mythopoeic stories, function. Diametrically opposed to Lewis' sacramental view of myth in which we find the highest religious truth,³⁷ and divine 'gleams' of celestial strength and reality,³⁸ we find the Nazi regime's manufacture of myth as lies of the German propaganda machine. This is another fundamental tension of myth that, whilst it can impart the highest truths, and even spiritual reality for Lewis, it is a term also attributed to stories or ideas that can be recognised as mere lies. Whilst Lewis generally enjoyed myths during his atheistic years he also initially dismissed them as lies, even though they were 'breathed through silver' (Lewis in Carpenter, 1997, p43). Indeed after his conversion he continued to attack myth as lies, for example, in what he saw as the popular science of Evolutionism, (see 'Funeral of a Great Myth'). He saw a natural progression in man's poetic myth-making imagination from the rise

and fall pattern in Keats' *Hyperion* and Wagner's *Ring*, and maintained that the Evolutionist myth took the elements it required from 'real' science. However, in contrast to the way myth arises in popular thought, as Lewis set out to describe in 'Funeral of a Great Myth', the Nazi propagandists specifically set out to create myths to replace the truth. They made myths to support their fascist world-view. The Nazis used myth for the purposes of propaganda and social control, appropriating the Aryan traditions and mythological heritage of the North, as well as constructing and manufacturing myths for political purposes. They played upon fear and intolerance, for example, when evoking anti-semitism. There is also a mythic resonance associated with the atrocities of the Nazis and a development of events into the mythic, as when Hitler and Eva Braun die in the *Götterdämmerung* of Berlin.

The terrible events of the Nazi rise to power and World War Two became a world crisis that profoundly affected millions, including both Cassirer and Lewis. Lewis' brother Warren returned to military service and Lewis' concerns about fascism emerged in his many writings condemning Nazi ideology along with communism and many other forms of anti-life.³⁹ A dramatic change also occurred in Cassirer's philosophical writings due to his experience as a Jewish liberal intellectual living through the 1930s and early 1940s. He abandoned work on the fourth volume of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, concerning the metaphysics of symbolic forms, and learnt to speak and write English (having only been able to read English before this).⁴⁰ He set about putting his philosophy into more accessible works such as *An Essay on Man* (1944). Cassirer taught for two years at Oxford (see above) then accepted a post at a university in Sweden. Whilst in Sweden his son-in-law committed suicide as the German troop movements encroached ever nearer.⁴¹ Cassirer's philosophy underwent a change in tenor as he blamed philosophers and even himself for failing to provide a counter voice to the rise of irrationality that occurred with the dominance of German national socialism. Cassirer's final work, *The Myth of the State* (1946), explores how myth continues to dominate mid-20th century politics. In this work he attacks the trends within philosophy that contributed to the political power of Nazi ideology, factors that 'enfeeble and slowly undermine the forces that could have resisted the modern political myths' (Cassirer, 1974, p293). These factors included the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, whose notion of *Geworfenheit* was fatalistic, Spengler's *The Decline of the*

West, the racism of Gobineau, Carlyle's political lectures that lend themselves to the support of hero worship, and the philosophies of Machiavelli amongst others, going back to Greek philosophy and Plato's myth-making, especially his creation of the hypothetical republic which is a virtual blueprint for the totalitarian state. Conflicts emerge from this epic discourse such as that between reason and faith (see Cassirer, 1974, p96). We can see that there is agreement in the writings of both Lewis and Cassirer that Hegel's philosophy lent itself to Nazi propaganda.⁴² Cassirer asserted that Hegel 'unconsciously unchained the most irrational powers that have ever appeared in man's social and political life' (Cassirer, 1974, p273). These powers fed on Hegel's notion of a 'world spirit' emerging in each epoch of history, and in one nation within each epoch which Hegel saw as having the 'right' to rule the rest.⁴³ The Nazi ideology thus removed the moral restrictions that are the ethical barrier to the dehumanisation and devaluation of human life. Their ideology and organisation returned to pagan elements of religion and involved a fundamental change in the treatment of myth.⁴⁴

1933 was the year that Hitler became Chancellor of Germany. Books were burnt and Jews murdered,⁴⁵ Cassirer left Germany and Lewis' allegorical satire *The Pilgrim's Regress* was published. Although Lewis wrote *The Pilgrim's Regress* as a satirical and allegorical work, the figure of Mr Savage⁴⁶ is more mythical than allegorical. Mr Savage is the dictator of the inhabitants of the North and is 'dressed in skins ... (with) an iron helmet on his head with horns stuck in it' (Lewis, 1977a, p135). Whilst for Griffin Savage is 'a Hitler-like figure' (Griffin, 1988, p108), Lindskoog recognises his similarity to Odin, Norse god of war and also identifies Savage's wife, Grimhild, as 'a murderous character Lewis borrowed from *The Nibelungenlied*, a German epic poem probably written around A.D. 1200' (Lindskoog, 1995, p65). Savage sings from the *Elder Edda*, a collection of heroic, mythological Norse poetry. He lives in a high hall looking toward the sea and savours the day when he will unleash his trolls on the unsuspecting peoples of the South and drink blood from human skulls. He sings from the *Seeress's Prophecy (Voluspa)*, one of the lays of the *Elder Edda*, in which a Seeress is questioned by Odin and recalls times before the world began and also sees ahead to 'after Ragnarok - the Doom of the Gods' (Larrington, 1996, p3). Savage sings,

'East sits the Old 'Un
In Iron-forest;

Feeds amidst it

Fenris' children.... (Lewis, 1977a, p135). This corresponds to stanza 40 of the *Seeress's Prophecy*,

In the East sat an old woman in Iron-wood

and nurtured there offspring of Fenrir (40:1, trans. Larrington, 1996, p9).

In the American edition of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* the head of the White Witch's secret police is a grey wolf called Fenris Ulf, this name being changed to Maugrim for the English publication.⁴⁷ In stanza 38-39 a hall is described that reflects what Lewis had in mind for Savage's hall. It stands

on Corpse-strand ; its doors look north;

drops of poison fall in through the roof-vents,

the hall is woven of serpents' spines.

There she saw wading in turbid streams

men who swore false oaths and murderers,

and those who seduced the confidantes of other men;

there Nidhogg sucks the bodies of the dead -

a Wolf tears the corpses of men ... (*Voluspa* 38-39, trans. Larrington, 1996, p9).

Nidhogg is a dragon that carries corpses in his wings. In *The Pilgrim's Regress*, John has to slay both Northern and Southern dragons in order to gain mastery of their particular diseases of the soul. Siegfried, hero in the lay of the Nibelungs, uses a magic sword to slay Fafnir the dragon. He then cooks its heart and takes its hoard. Lewis also created an allegorical dragon symbolising the corruption of greed in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (1955) that, like Smaug in Tolkien's *Hobbit*, is preoccupied with guarding its hoard of gold. In *Voyage of the Dawn Treader* Eustace has to shed his skin of greed in order to restore his humanity. All these examples demonstrate Lewis' creation and use of symbols to make 'concrete' things that are inner, abstract, ethical, allegorical or possibly mythical.

The Pilgrim's Regress sees the inhabitants of the North described as a dwarf sub-species that include the Marxomanni (red dwarfs), Gangomanni (gangsters), Mussolimini (Italian fascists) and Swastici (black shirts). These creatures are inhuman 'They were not men ... not dwarf men, but real dwarfs - trolls ... I felt all the time that

if they killed me it wouldn't be murder, any more than if a crocodile or a gorilla killed me. It is a different species' (Lewis, 1977a, p134). The satire here is that the Nazis wanted 'a *Herrenvolk* against the non-Aryans' (Lewis, 1996d, p112) seeing the pure Aryan as a different and superior species but in Lewis' satire what he saw as their inner qualities are made 'concrete' and so they are described as impaired with the diminutive stature of dwarfs and trolls.

One of the sources of contention for both Lewis and Cassirer, amongst others, concerns the Nazi appropriation of Norse myth, Lewis being particularly anxious about their appropriation of Wagner.⁴⁸ In 'First and Second Things' (1942)⁴⁹ Lewis acknowledged that he was a romantic who had 'frankly revelled in my Nibelungs, and specially in Wagner's version of the story' (Lewis, 1996d, p23). His narrative poem *Dymer* used imagery from Wagner's *Ring* (see previous chapter). Rackham's pictures of the *Ring* cycle and gramophone recordings of 'Ride of the Valkyries' had been experienced by Lewis during his adolescence, and they produced an emotional response that survived even into Lewis' middle age,

Even now the very smell of those volumes can come over me with the poignancy of remembered calf-love. It was, therefore, a bitter moment when the Nazis took over my treasure and made it part of their ideology (Lewis, 2000, p653).

He argued that whilst the Nazis were 'the only people in Europe who had tried to revive their pre-Christian mythology as a living faith' (Lewis, 2000, p654), they have also proved themselves 'incapable of understanding that mythology' (Lewis, 2000, p654). This is because the Nazis chose Hagen, a minor villain, 'as their national hero' (Lewis, 2000, p653) instead of Siegfried, thus misinterpreting Wagner; they failed to understand that the gods of Norse mythology were fighting in full knowledge that they would suffer ultimate defeat. For Lewis it is a mythology about 'heroic stands, and fighting against hopeless odds' (Lewis, 2000, p654), not the underhanded 'by any means necessary' approach of the character Hagen in Wagner's *Ring* cycle. The Nazis revival of their pagan mythology was a deplorable 'retrogression' (Lewis, 2000, p654) that irked Lewis because he claimed that the Nazis were taking mythology too seriously (something Lewis could also be accused of since he used myth as a basis to argue for Christian

faith). The Nazis thus returned to a minimal religion, setting aside the Christian and moral order.⁵⁰

For Cassirer Northern myth fed the racial theories of Count Gobineau. Gobineau pointed out that moral actions did not dictate the fate of the hero, warrior or nobleman. As Gobineau explained

The man of noble race, the true Aryan arrived at all honors of Valhalla by the sole force of his origin; whereas the poor, the captives, the serfs, in one word the mestizos, the half-castes of inferior birth indifferently fell into the icy darkness of Niflheim (Gobineau cited in Cassirer, 1974, p238).

In *Pilgrim's Regress* the heroism philosophy of Savage similarly reduces death in comparison to the 'excellent deed ... (which) is eternal. The hero alone has this privilege, that death for him is not defeat' (Lewis, 1977a, p137). For Cassirer Odin's portrayal as a man and a hero by Carlyle allowed for the collective wish to be vested in the leader in a similar fashion. The leader becomes the soothsayer, the *homo magus* and *homo divinus* (Cassirer, 1974, p288). There is a relinquishing of individual responsibility in the collective desire satisfied through the leader.

Cassirer examined several key factors involved in reinforcing and preparing the way for the emergence in Germany of mythical thought and political myths. In Germany after World War I he observed conditions of unrest, unemployment, inflation, the 'whole social and economic system was threatened with a complete collapse' (Cassirer, 1974, p278). It was a time of crisis and, drawing upon Malinowski's observations of the responses of primitive societies to times of crisis, Cassirer asserted that rational, empirical reasoning falls to myth, magic and ritual. In these conditions mythical elements come to the fore along with clan organisation. In totemistic societies life is based upon mythical conceptions and this is the power that binds them and emerges through belief in animal ancestors and fixed tradition. Drawing upon the *Memoirs of Albert Speer*, a leading Nazi, William Schultz observes that for the Nazi 'mythical world view ... political rallies were events like primitive ritual: fires burned, flags waved, large masses of people gathered, smoke filled the air, people lost their individual identity through uniforms and mass chanting' (Schultz, 2000, pp. 234-235). Reason and objectivity were thus lost and myth was reasserted. Cassirer considered that man returns to the mythical organisation during periods of crisis. Lewis expressed

similar sentiments in his essay 'Historicism' whilst observing the popular attitude to the plague both in the *Iliad* (Bk. I) and at the start of *Oedipus Tyrannus*. In this attitude Lewis saw examples of Historicism. However, it is arguable that the mass fear generated by the plague in Thebes brings to the forefront of Theban society the normally underlying mythical mentality. Lewis explored a sense of the return of the irrational and the resurgence of the mythical in *That Hideous Strength* (1945) where the fascistic N.I.C.E. try to impose their version of reality, employing the character Mark Studdock to propagandise the cause of N.I.C.E. Thus they seek to create the myth that they are working for everyone's benefit when in fact they are systematically dismantling human rights and destroying the established moral order. For Cassirer,

In all critical moments of man's social life, the rational forces that resist the rise of the old mythical conceptions are no longer sure of themselves. In these moments the time for myth has come again' (Cassirer, 1974, p280).

Similarly in *Till We Have Faces* people put themselves under the power of irrational mythical mentalities during times of crisis. In a bad year they resort to making human sacrifices. They want to be healed by Psyche but she is later cast out and taken for sacrifice because of their irrational fear of her. Their whole society and religion rests on mythical mentalities but these mentalities are shown to be strongest when crisis looms and the people become a mob. Similarly a sense of mass return to the mythical and irrationality occurs in Lewis' Narnian chronicle *The Last Battle*. In this chronicle an ape called Shift (one of the talking animals of Narnia) uses an ersatz lion to control the Narnians. The Narnians obey because they fear they will lose the power of speech that was bestowed on them by Aslan. Their fear drives them to replace Aslan with a false god, a donkey wearing the skin of a lion, and to allow the demonic god Tash entrance into the realm of Narnia.

Cassirer considered myth as a part of humanity that latently waits to re-emerge when social order crumbles, returning man to submission before 'demonic mythical powers' (Cassirer, 1974, p 280). A sense of bitterness is evident in Cassirer's final assessment of the human condition. Myth is compared to cultural forces through the simile of the Babylonian mythical serpent Tiamat whom Marduk slays along with various evil dragons. From Tiamat's limbs the world is formed into the order of stars, planets, heavens, earth and man. Thus order emerges from primal chaos. In Cassirer's

view human culture is a monster that similarly has to be subdued and ordered. However it requires the powers of intellect, ethics and art, and the vigilance of philosophers, to check myth and prevent the return of chaos, otherwise 'Mythical thought then starts to rise anew and to pervade the whole of man's cultural and social life' (Cassirer, 1974, p298). Similarly, when discussing popular Evolutionism, Lewis argued that the Evolutionary myth supports 'modern politics' (Lewis, 2000, p31) and whilst 'it is imagination which makes the Myth: it takes over from rational thought only what it finds convenient' (Lewis, 2000, p30). Lewis proposed that imagination must be checked by intellect and reason (see Lewis, 2000, p32 and previous chapter).

In a broader, more aesthetic context from the discussion of political myth, the artist drawing upon myth may find that mythic materials have a tendency to impose their patterns upon the artist despite the artist's struggle for domination.⁵¹ Thus the question arises as to how Lewis, as a Christian Apologist professing to have had a purely intellectual conversion, overcomes the inherent tensions of myth as a 'living power' (Cassirer, 1972, p153). Presumably what Lewis wanted to achieve is the realisation of myth's reflection of celestial reality, a kind of recognition of the transcendental, not its underlying qualities of instinct, inhumanity and dominance as an irrational social force. Lewis' use of myth is complex, he treads a fine line between revealing the submerging power of 'genuine' myth whilst fashioning his works for ethical and transcendent purposes. The tensions of thought are played against each other, the irrational versus reason, the mythical versus the 'higher' religious consciousness. Insight can be gained into Lewis' use of mythical consciousness by investigating the symbolic function of myth within his works, thus revealing myth's peculiar kind of world-view, causation, dialectic, self and the 'I'. Cassirer's study of the phenomenology of myth delineated the characteristics of myth's operation in consciousness. It is through recognising Lewis' use of these characteristics of myth that the symbolic function of myth is revealed in his works.⁵²

Footnotes

- ¹ Cassirer's parents were both Jewish and, although the exact influence of his Jewish cultural heritage upon his philosophy has yet to be fully assessed, for Lofts 'the philosophy of symbolic forms cannot be said to be a Jewish philosophy in any strict sense of the word' (Lofts, 2002).
- ² See Cassirer, E., (1955) *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. 2, *Mythical Thought*, Yale. For comment on Cassirer see Verene, 2000, pviii. For Lewis on number and mythical thought see 'Dogma and the Universe', (Lewis, 2000, p121); and also *Perelandra*, (Lewis, 1989, pp. 293-294). For Lewis on the 'great' myth and science see 'Is Theology Poetry?' and 'Funeral of a Great Myth' and 'The World's Last Night'. For Lewis on myth and theology see 'Is Theology Poetry?' or 'Myth Became Fact', among many other writings. For Lewis on myth and anthropology see *The Discarded Image*, (Lewis, 1995, p1) or *An Experiment in Criticism*, (Lewis, 1996b, p42).
- ³ See *Romanticism Comes of Age* (1966) in which Barfield describes the 'realm where language is born' (Barfield, 1966, p253).
- ⁴ Cassirer, 1972, p109.
- ⁵ There remains contention as to whether psychology is a symbolic form. See Wurmser, L., (1981) 'Is Psychoanalysis a Separate Field of Symbolic Forms?' in *Humanities in Society* 4 (1981), pp. 263-294.
- ⁶ See also Verene, 2000, pvii.
- ⁷ See Cassirer, 1972, pp. 25-27.

- 8 See Ch. 3 of Cassirer, E., (1944) *An Essay on Man*, Yale.
- 9 Debate continues as to whether *spirit* should be considered as part of Cassirer's holistic creation of the symbol and the function of symbolic thought (see discussion on the Cassirer Society Web Site, www.cassirer.org). In my view it definitely should be included, (see Cassirer, 1996, pp. 30-31). Cassirer commentator William Schultz observes that 'the mythical symbol, the image, depends more on the five senses and the feeling in the body than do modern scientific symbols' (Schultz, 2000, p58).
- 10 Lewis, 1958, p45.
- 11 Lewis, 1958, p51.
- 12 For Duriez Lewis' 'symbolism helps to make his work a lamp as well as a mirror - depicting reality but also illuminating it' (Duriez, 2000, p193). For a list of the most characteristic symbols and symbolic themes that Lewis employs in his fiction see Duriez, 2000, p193. Doris Myers succinctly explains the problems posed by language being used to symbolise reality, (see Myers, 1994, pp. 4-13). C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards maintained that through a Pavlovian kind of association the 'symbol' (word) and 'referent' (object) come to acquire meaning. However, symbols can sometimes have no referent because words and things become related through 'the primitive idea ... (of) some magic bond' (Ogden and Richards in Myers, 1994, p5). Ernst Cassirer expressed similar sentiments, 'In primitive thought it is still very difficult to differentiate between the two spheres of being and meaning. They are constantly being confused: a symbol is looked upon as if it were endowed with magical or physical powers' (Cassirer, 1972, p57). In 1925 Cassirer wrote that 'Long before the written sign is understood as an expression of an object it is feared as the substantial embodiment, as it were, of the forces that emanate from it, as a kind of demonic double of the object' (Cassirer, 1955, p238). In *Poetic Diction* (1926) Barfield argued that language is 'related to nature' (Myers, 1994, p10) and thus language

can reflect ‘the true character of the universe’ (Myers, 1994, p10). To some extent Lewis agreed, particularly in seeing original metaphors as archetypes, see Lewis, ‘Bluspels and Flalansfers, A Semantic Nightmare’ and ‘Is Theology Poetry?’ (1945). In a more general sense, Lewis explored symbolism in relation to Christian truth, see ‘Fern-seed and Elephants’ (1959). In *The Uses of Philosophy* (1992) Mary Warnock suggests that Lewis’ assertion ‘In life and art both ... we are always trying to catch in our net of successive moments something that is not successive’ (Lewis, 1982b, p45) highlights the philosopher’s problem of attempting to convey truth whilst having to use the concrete and temporal to describe things which cannot be observed through any sensory awareness. For Warnock this inevitably leads philosophers of theology to ‘have recourse to symbols, visible signs of what lies beyond the visible’ (Warnock, 1992, p178). For Cassirer ‘all mental processes fail to grasp reality itself, and in order to represent it, to hold it at all, they are driven to the use of symbols’ (Cassirer, 1953b, p7) however, there is the difficulty that a symbol may also ‘obscure what it seeks to reveal’ (Cassirer, 1953b, p7). In ‘The Efficacy of Prayer’ (1959) Lewis ponders questions of god and the finite nature of man recognising that ‘what I have offered can be, at the very best, only a mental model or symbol ... The reality is doubtless not comprehensible by our faculties’ (Lewis, 1998b, p84). In ‘Is Theology Poetry?’ (1945) Lewis argues that he cannot ‘restate ... (his) belief in a form free from metaphor and symbol’ (Lewis, 2000, p18) and he cites I.A. Richards in his argument as to how symbol and metaphor provide theological meaning.

- 13 Cassirer, E., (1921) ‘Hölderlin und der deutsche Idealismus’ in *Idee und Gestalt, Fünf Aufsätze*.
- 14 See Gutmann, J., (1949) ‘Cassirer’s Humanism’ in *The Philosophy of Ernst Cassirer*, Schlipp, P.A., (Ed.) The Library of Living Philosophers Inc., p449.
- 15 In ‘Dante’s Similes’ (1940) Lewis also comments on Dante’s use of light, concurring with Dr. Edwyn Bevan’s suggestion, in *Symbolism and Belief* (1938),

of its affinity with the human mind ‘God is, or is like, light... for every devotional, philosophical, and theological purpose imaginable within a Christian, or indeed a monotheistic, frame of reference’ (Lewis, 1996c, p71). In Tolkien’s fiction goodness and order are represented by light whilst he uses the ‘dark to represent evil and chaos, and, in doing so, he employs archetypes traceable to many ancient mythologies’ (Sullivan, 1992, p108).

¹⁶ Cassirer, 1972, p73; Cassirer, 1974, p13.

¹⁷ A theory Barfield supported through philological evidence (see previous chapter) and referred to as the evolution of consciousness (see Tennyson, 1999, pxxx). Lewis’ comments on languages suggest his views on the notion of subject-object reduction, since he considered that all languages ‘progress from being very particular to being very general’ (Lewis, 1993, p296). In their early stages they are ‘bursting with meaning’ (Lewis, 1993, p296) but in their later stages they are ‘so far away from real things that they really say nothing’ (Lewis, 1993, p296).

¹⁸ See Cassirer, 1955, pp. 235-261; and also Schultz, 2000, pp. 161-190.

¹⁹ See also Cassirer, 1972, pp. 70-71.

²⁰ Whilst geist is considered to be opposed to life, Cassirer maintained that geist is not ‘antagonistic toward’ (Cassirer, 1996, p31) life, and thus has a ‘correlative relationship’ (Cassirer, 1996, p31) that emerges in artistic creation. See Cassirer, 1996, p7 and pp. 3-33, especially pp. 30-31; and also Krois and Verene, 1996, pp. x-xi and pxviii. See also Cassirer, 1955, Vol. 1, p83 for Cassirer’s observations on various treatments of spirit.

²¹ The term ‘spiritual energies’ (Cassirer, 1955, Vol. 1, p82) emerges during Cassirer’s discussion of forms and the ‘totality of spirit’ (Cassirer, 1955, Vol. 1, p83). His philosophy is an attempt to account for the cultural forms emerging as

products of human spirit (see *PSF* I, pp. 73-85). As an instance of Cassirer's emphasis upon the inner mental processes, consider his observation that myth has often been said to be opposed to science, 'scientific thought contradicts and suppresses mythical thought' (Cassirer, 1972, p70). He goes on to explain, in *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. 4, *The Metaphysics of Symbolic Forms*, that 'the worldview of myth seems to be incompatible with that of science - and yet myth and science become entwined in a peculiar way if we conceive them both as efforts of the human mind' (Cassirer, 1996, p7) {see my Introduction}.

22 Cassirer, 1974, p21.

23 See Lewis, 1993, p291.

24 This form, however, is composed of several aspects. He thus divided his book into four sections: Myth as a Form of Thought, Myth as a Form of Intuition, Myth as a Life Form, and The Dialectic of the Mythical Consciousness.

25 Cassirer's analysis of mythical thinking took the form of a phenomenological study, using 'phenomenology' more in the sense that Hegel used it in *Phenomenology of Spirit* (Hegel, 1807) than in the sense of phenomenology developed by Edmund Husserl in the 1920's. In Hegel's approach myth departs from 'psychology and psychologism' (Cassirer, 1955, pxv) and instead is considered in a more universal manner. Hegel was concerned with spirit, or knowledge, and the way modes of thought suggest a kind of self-consciousness, (see Hegel's Preface to *Phänomenology des Geistes*; and Cassirer, 1955, pxv-xviii and p26). William Schultz describes Cassirer's replacement of Hegel's categories, (see Schultz, 2000, p4). The difference between Cassirer's phenomenology and Hegel's lies in Cassirer's development of the notion of dialectic and his view of each form's independence as opposed to Hegel's phenomenology which 'leads to the dominance of the one form of logic over other forms' (Krois and Verene, 1996, pxviii). Growing out of European crisis and countering cultural turmoil, rising subjectivism in philosophy and the

sterility of scientific positivism, Husserlian phenomenology grew as an attempt to return to fundamentals. It did this by positing that the only absolute data is that purest phenomena of the mind.

²⁶ Whilst in ‘Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What’s To Be Said’ (1956), Lewis says that ‘The Fantastic or Mythical is a Mode’ (Lewis, 2000, p528), in Preface to *George MacDonald: An Anthology*, he asserts that myth frees us from ‘our normal mode of consciousness’ (Lewis, 1946b, px) {see also my comments in Chapter One}. See also Lewis’ essay ‘On Stories’ (1947), originally published as part of the collection *Essays Presented to Charles Williams*, OUP, in which stories are described as ‘series of events’ (Lewis, 2000, p503) although for Lewis the real theme may be something that rises beyond a series.

²⁷ Lewis’ views on ‘phenomenalism’ were developed through debate with Barfield in the unpublished *Summae Metaphysices contra Anthroposophos*, a dispute concerning Knowing, Spirit and Being. An element of phenomenological method also emerges in Lewis’ debate with E.M.W. Tillyard in *The Personal Heresy* (1939).

²⁸ See Adey, L., (1978) *C.S. Lewis’s “Great War” with Owen Barfield*, University of Victoria.

²⁹ Echoes of this emerge in Lewis’ letter to his brother Warren of 17 January 1932 concerning concrete experience and the development of language (see Lewis, 1993, p296).

³⁰ Thorson argues that Lewis ‘spent the major portion of his life as a teacher and critic, immersing himself in literature and aesthetic experiences’ (Thorson, 1988, p110). For Lewis, Thorson observes, experience itself is divided into ‘physical, psychological and spiritual experiences’ (Thorson, 1988, p107). Lewis commented on aspects of experience in *Letters to Malcolm*, Ch. 5 and 18.

- 31 Platonism was central to Lewis' views on, and acceptance of, Christian faith, {see *Surprised by Joy* and my Introduction and Chapter One}. For Lewis on Neo-Platonism and mysticism see Lewis, 1998a, p61. In my previous chapter, we saw that Lewis did not merely study philosophy, he tried to appreciate philosophies as ways to truth, in line with the intentions of their early proponents. Writing in the last years of his life, Lewis states that he did not seek 'the mystic way' (Lewis, 1998a, p63). However, he does use Platonism in his fictional structuring of Narnia's reality in line with the Platonic notion of God as the ultimate reality. By Lewis' own admission he sought the heightened experiences and different states that are obtainable through myth for those able to 'receive' them, (see Lewis, 1996b, pp. 40-49).
- 32 Lewis, 1979a, p42.
- 33 Kant in Kenny, 1998, p255.
- 34 Lewis saw Plato and Virgil as 'myth-makers' (Lewis, 1977f, p91). Cassirer commented on 'Platonic Myths' (Cassirer, 1974, p47) in *Myth of the State* (1946).
- 35 Lewis maintained that J.R.R. Tolkien's 'Ents and Lothlorien' (Lewis, 1996b, p43), in his fantasy work *The Lord of the Rings*, have a 'mythical quality' (Lewis, 1996b, p42). He also proposed that when reading *The Lord of the Rings* 'we are reading myth' (Lewis, 2000, p521). In *An Essay on Man*, Cassirer argued that the modern poet occupies the same 'world' as the first nations and early myth-makers for whom 'myth was not an empty allegory but a living power' (Cassirer, 1972, p153). For Tolkien the mythopoeic writer becomes a 'sub-creator' when fashioning myth, splinters of God's reflected glory are ingrained into the sub-creator's fashioning.
- 36 Although Lewis' imaginative embrace of 'great myths' (Lewis, 1996b, p42) in *Experiment in Criticism* and in *Surprised by Joy* (see Lewis, 1977e, p188),

contrasts with his treatment of ‘the great Myth’ (Lewis, 2000, p22) discussed in ‘Funeral of a Great Myth’ and the ‘modern concept of Progress or Evolution (as popularly imagined) [which] is simply a myth’ (Lewis, 2000, p46) according to Lewis, see ‘The World’s Last Night’ (1951), see also Chapter One.

37 Lewis, 2000, p16.

38 Lewis, 1989, p328.

39 See Lewis, C.S., (1996) *Compelling Reason, Essays on Ethics and Theology*, Fount. This book is a very useful starting point for Lewis’ writings condemning social control, whether of the fascists, communists, British government, or Akhenaton the ancient Egyptian Pharaoh. In fact he rails against any movement he saw as reductive. In loose chronological order of publication/address Nazism is referred to in the following essays and works: *The Pilgrim’s Regress* (1933) in which it is satirised; the essay ‘First and Second Things’ (1942), in which Lewis attacks the Nazi appropriation of Norse mythology and Wagner. In ‘Equality’ (1943) Lewis attacks the ‘brutal form of Nazi ideology’ (Lewis, 1996d, p29) which he equated with a ‘craving for inequality’ (Lewis, 1996d, p29). In Lewis’ 1940s BBC radio broadcast discussions of morality, published later in *Mere Christianity*, he questions Nazi morality, (see Lewis, 1977d, pp. 17 and 24). In *The Abolition of Man* (1943) Lewis attacks invented ideologies citing the Nazis (see Lewis, 1978a, p44). This notion is explained further in ‘The Poison of Subjectivism’ (1943) in which Lewis attacks subjectivism as a reductive approach to reason, particularly to practical reason understood as the ‘judgement of good and evil’ (Lewis, 1991, p99). Such judgements are viewed as value judgements and merely responses to feeling or social conditioning, we might equally be ‘conditioned to feel otherwise’ (Lewis, 1991, p99). Following this argument morality is improvable and ideology exchangeable, ‘Everyone is indignant when he hears the Germans define justice as that which is to the interest of the Third Reich’ (Lewis, 1991, p99). However such indignation is ‘groundless if we ourselves regard morality as a subjective sentiment to be altered at will’ (Lewis, 1991, p99). Lewis maintained that Morality must be

overarching and accepted as objective values, not merely something we can modify to create a version for our own particular ideology. In 'Membership' (1945) Nazism is mentioned during Lewis' attack on the notion of equality since Lewis advocated a hierarchy leading to God (see Lewis, 1998b, p9). In 'Christian Apologetics' (1945) Lewis condemns viewing the wrongs of the world as 'someone else's fault - the Capitalists', the Government's, the Nazis', the Generals', etc.' (Lewis, 1996d, p71). In *That Hideous Strength* (1945) the N.I.C.E. impose control with a fascistic private police force. In 'Religion Without Dogma?' (1946) Lewis attacks the notion of a 'minimal religion' (Lewis, 1996d, p101) as espoused by Professor H.H. Price, suggesting that such a religion allows for 'the Nazi view that He is present in a special way in the German race' (Lewis, 1996d, p101), seeing this as similar to the way that He is viewed as present in a special way in other religions. Lewis noted that for the Nazis a diffused impersonal spirit emerges in the German people. In 'Vivisection' (1947) Lewis attacks the view that vivisection can be conducted on animals because, following this line of reasoning, man can also be considered as simply another animal and therefore experimentation on men can similarly be 'justified'. Lewis recognised that experiments on men had been conducted by the Nazi scientists and feared that scientists of the free world would do so too (see Lewis, 1996d, p113). He argued that a victory for vivisection is a victory for 'non-moral utilitarianism over the old world of ethical law' (Lewis, 1996d, p114) and setting aside the old moral order means that man becomes as much a victim as the animals. This type of thinking is condemned by Lewis as leading to 'Dachau and Hiroshima' (Lewis, 1996d, p114). In 'The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment' (1949) Lewis attacks the denigration of morality and the reduction of people to the level of 'a mere object, a patient, a "case"' (Lewis, 1996d, p128). This type of thinking leads to new depths of sub-humanity, and the kind of anti-life imagined by Aldous Huxley, George Orwell 'and partially realized in Hitler's Germany' (Lewis, 1996d, p142). The extermination of the Jews based upon racial theories that 'may come to seem, or even to be, "useful", and "necessity" was always "the tyrant's plea"' (Lewis, 1996d, p142). The White Witch Jarvis has secret police in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950).

In 'Willing Slaves of the Welfare State' (1958) Lewis attacks Hitler's treatment of Jews as 'objects; killed not for ill desert but because, on his theories, they were a disease in society' (Lewis, 1996d, p178). In *Reflections on the Psalms* (1961) Lewis attacks the 'blind' acceptance of propaganda lies as a weapon used by the British during World War Two in order to induce 'men to shed their blood' (Lewis, 1977f, p30) even though the German propaganda machine of the Nazi régime also used this weapon in the war of ideas. For Lewis the acceptance that we must dispense with morality to wage war demonstrated a terrifying lack of the conception of good and evil. How we live is thus more important than whether we live for Lewis, even if the moral path means the doom of civilisation. See also the satirical *Screwtape Proposes a Toast* (1965) in which the senior devil, Screwtape, identifies Hegel's philosophy as propaganda from which the devils derived Nazism and Communism (see Lewis, 1977g, p17).

40 Lofts observes that upon accepting a post at All Souls College in Oxford 'Cassirer's main reservation concerned the problem of language: for while he read English he could not really speak nor write it. However, within a few short months Cassirer was preparing and giving his lectures in English. When one compares the lectures from his first year at Oxford with those of the following year, to say nothing of those written at Yale some ten years latter {sic}, the constant and rapid progress in Cassirer's English is quite amazing' (Lofts, 2002).

41 See Toni Cassirer's comments in Lofts, S.G., (2000) 'Translator's Introduction' in Cassirer, E., *The Logic of the Cultural Sciences, Five Studies*, Lofts, S.G., (trans.) Yale University Press, pxiv.

42 See Lewis, 1996d, p179. See also the satirical *Screwtape Proposes a Toast* (1965) in which senior devil, Screwtape, identifies Hegel as 'another indispensable propagandist on our side' (Lewis, 1977g, p17) from whose philosophy 'we easily contrived both the Nazi and the Communist state' (Lewis, 1977g, p17). Whilst Cassirer generally expressed similar views he pointed out that 'Bolshevism, Fascism, and National Socialism have disintegrated and cut

into pieces the Hegelian system' (Cassirer, 1974, p249). The philosophy in question concerns Hegel's philosophy of right and assertion of 'the truth which lies in power' (Hegel in Cassirer, 1974, p267), although Lewis, as a religious apologist, is mainly concerned with Hegel's notion of spirit realised through the state as a kind of cosmic thought. Hegel's philosophy of absolute spirit lent itself to the agendas of the totalitarians and, for Lewis, it is a notion that deflects people from the truth of God Incarnate. For further comment by Lewis on Hegel see Lewis, 1991, p134, p141, p203; Lewis, 1996d, p179; Lewis, 1979a, p103; Lewis, 1977d, p40; Lewis, 1974, p86; Lewis, 1996a, p106; Lewis, 1977e, p178 and p179.

⁴³ See Cassirer, 1974, p273 or Chapter 17 of *Myth of the State*; and Lewis, 2000, p622 in Lewis' essay 'Historicism' (1950). See also Hegel, G.W.F., (1896) *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, Dyde, S.W., (trans.) London: George Bell and Sons.

⁴⁴ Siegfried Kracauer's analysis of German newsreel films exposed German propaganda that explained the French defeat in World War II as 'the French Army weakened by racial crossbreeding' (Ayçoberry, 1981, p90). Kracauer determined that 'everything in these films served the purpose of constructing momentarily necessary myths' (Ayçoberry, 1981, p90). Hitler was portrayed as a figure that was 'distant and Olympian' (Ayçoberry, 1981, p90) and the ideological message became reinforced through imagery and editorial control. By concentrating on racial purity Hitler could reinvent national identity, popularising an image that played upon historic intolerance. See also Leeper, J., (6th June 1942) 'Hagen the New Hero' in *Time and Tide*.

⁴⁵ Griffin, 1988, p107.

⁴⁶ Lewis commented to Greeves that 'for dictators, "Nordic" tyrants and so on ... read the chapter about Mr Savage in the [*Pilgrim's*] *Regress* and you have my views' (Lewis, 1979b, p468).

- 47 Paul Ford notes Fenris' origin in Scandinavian mythology as the offspring of Loki 'god of strife and spirit of evil' (Ford, 1994, p189).
- 48 Rosefield and Fest both acknowledge the importance of Wagner on Hitler's thought. Wagner's influence was reflected in Hitler's own work *Mein Kampf* where Hitler maintained that Wagner supported Aryan racial purity. Anti-Wagnerian Hartman Zelinsky saw Wagner's opera *Parsifal* as 'a sinister millenarianist fantasy about the redemption of an Aryan Jesus from Judaism' (Holden, et al., 1995, p485) but Wagner himself emphasised 'that the blood of Christ flowed not for any "one privileged race", but for "the whole of humankind"' (Wagner cited in Rosefield, 1998, p23). Debate continues on the nature of the Wagner estate's involvement in supporting Volkish ideology. Fitzpatrick's article 'Lewis and Wagner' (1981) chronicles the Northern mythological influence on Lewis, Wagner and, to some extent, Tolkien. Tolkien 'professed to despise Wagner's version of the myth' (Fitzpatrick, 1981, p4) despite similarities between his *Lord of the Rings* and Wagner's operatic *Ring* saga. Tolkien wanted to maintain a distance between his interpretation of the northern myths and Wagner's but, nevertheless, Tolkien and Lewis were both profoundly influenced by Wagner.
- 49 Lewis' article 'First and Second Things' (1942) was a response to his discovery of the German appropriation of Wagner which Lewis said he had 'read in *Time and Tide* on 6th June [1942]' (Lewis, 1996d, p23). The article he refers to is 'Hagen, The New Hero' (1942) by Janet Leeper. Each wartime instalment of *Time and Tide* is largely devoted to news of the war's progress. War-time bluster, bombast, propaganda and apprehension make up each edition, with the front page usually dedicated to a map of the German and Allied positions whilst inside Hitler is satirised in cartoons. For the 6th June edition Lewis had contributed a poem called 'Epitaph' (see *Time and Tide*, 6th June 1942, p460) in which he mused that 'She was delicately, beautifully made' (1:1). This unknown figure is compared to bombs that are similarly 'Delicately, beautifully made' (1:5) but whilst this unidentified 'she' is female and can generate life, bombs can

only destroy. Leeper's article raised concerns about the Nazi return to paganism and appropriation of Wagner. This struck a chord in Lewis because Wagner's version of Northern myth had been such an important imaginative wellspring since childhood. However, what had been a source of mythopoeic inspiration since childhood was to be suborned by the Nazis.

⁵⁰ In 'Hagen, The New Hero' (1942), the article in *Time and Tide* on 6th June 1942 that inspired Lewis to write 'First and Second Things', Janet Leeper had observed not just the Nazi appropriation of Nordic myth but also Himmler's 13th December 1939 'decree ... that Christmas was to be turned back into a "Feast of the Sun" and that the adoration of the Holy Child was to be replaced by the adoration of primitive forces of nature' (Leeper, 1942, p466). Lewis attacked similar thinking in the essay 'Religion Without Dogma?' (1946) where he countered the Naturalism espoused by Professor Price. He viewed naturalism as the stepping stone to a minimal religion, similar attempts having been made by 'Akhenaton and Julian the Apostate down to Lord Herbert of Cherbury and the late H.G. Wells' (Lewis, 1996d, p100).

⁵¹ Moorman, C., (1960) *Arthurian Triptych: Mythic Materials in Charles Williams, C.S. Lewis and T.S. Eliot*, University of California Press.

⁵² I am not saying that Lewis read about them from Cassirer's publications of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* and then put these mythical characteristics into his fictional works, since I have no evidence that that is what happened. The only evidence I have that Lewis read Cassirer's symbolic philosophy is the copy of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Volume 3, *The Phenomenology of Knowledge*, previously owned by Lewis which is currently owned by the Marion E. Wade Center in Illinois. This volume was published in 1957 and was translated by Ralph Manheim. Lewis' signature is on a blank page and there are pencil markings highlighting some of the sentences and paragraphs within the book. Christopher Mitchell, Ph.D., Director of the Marion E. Wade Center and Assistant Professor of Theology at Wheaton College, Il., confirmed in his email

to me of 8th March 2002 his posting of a copy of 'the page with Lewis's signature in case verification is required' (Mitchell, 2002). However, whilst the information concerning Cassirer's myth phenomenology in this volume could have influenced Lewis' writing of the chapter on myth in *An Experiment in Criticism* (1961), his ownership of this Cassirer volume could not have influenced his writing of *The Cosmic Trilogy*, or the Narnia Chronicles or *Till We Have Faces*. However, this is not to rule out the possibility that Lewis could, for example, have simply read a copy of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Volume 2, *Mythical Thought* in its 1925 German publication *Das Mythische Denken*, but there is no evidence to support such a possibility. In another approach to the problem of Cassirer as an influence on Lewis, we do know that Owen Barfield read Cassirer's first volume of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, concerning language, and that he debated ideas on myth with Lewis. So this is probably a more viable way that Cassirer's ideas could have found their way into Lewis' works. However, even if this were so, Lewis also developed his own ideas on myth and whilst there are areas of similarity with Cassirer there are also areas of difference. Essentially whilst both Lewis and Cassirer tried to account for myth, it remains a part of world culture and the heritage or legacy of mankind. Despite the uniqueness of myth, the contrasting approaches of Lewis and Cassirer reveal that it meant something different to each of these thinkers. Their views hardened as Cassirer recognised the affect of political myth upon the German people whilst, although Lewis came to Christian faith through myth, his faith was later tested after he suffered bereavement.

The Symbolic Form of Myth in *Perelandra*

As Cassirer's *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. 2, *Mythical Thought* reveals, all areas of Cassirer's approach are fundamentally based upon his understanding of mythical consciousness which he saw as a 'primal source' (Cassirer, 1955, pxv). This notion has a resonance with the consciousness C.S. Lewis evokes in *Perelandra*. The Green Lady of Perelandra is 'primally innocent' (Manlove, 1975, p112) and her environment exhibits 'that condition of Perelandra which makes the planet more than merely strange - original innocence' (Manlove, 1975, p119).¹ The Green Lady lives 'deep within the region of her own innocence, and by that innocence (she is) at once so protected and so endangered' (Lewis, 1989, p251). She is also referred to as God's 'very young child' (Lewis, 1989, p251) and her innocence informs her child-like mentality. Cassirer commentator William Schultz observes that 'It has often been noted that the experience of the child resembles quite strikingly that of primitives. Cassirer cites the psychologist Werner, who claims "the child experiences spiritual-personal contents as concrete and corporeal"' (Schultz, 2000, p75).

To understand how such 'contents' are realised as 'concrete' for the Green Lady we have to understand the nature of her world, her experience, state of existence and relation to myth. The Green Lady of Perelandra directly 'hears' the Voice of God in her mind (see Lewis, 1989, p249) and there are moments when Ransom senses it too (see Lewis, 1989, pp. 270-276). She lives in a sacramental world. Ransom's journey from Earth to Perelandra is a journey not only to another world but also a journey into another 'order of reality' (Manlove, 1975, p118). The notion of greater reality on spiritually elevated worlds recalls Plato's philosophy of moving towards the ultimate reality of God and therefore suggests a movement or re-direction away from merely physical concerns. Ransom has no doubt that 'whatever happened here would be of such a nature that Earth-men would call it mythological' (Lewis, 1989, p274). Myth is not just a pattern that Lewis is trying to exploit but a way of evoking experience and that

“leap in our blood” which responds to great myth’ (Lewis, 1969, p299), thereby putting us into the mythical frame of mind. To consider the pattern of myth as an object of contemplation and to attempt to grasp its power is to appreciate the holistic experience myth imparts in consciousness. This can be viewed as an attempt to capture through story or, using Lewis’ metaphor for story, ‘to catch in our net of successive moments something that is not successive’ (Lewis, 1982b, p45). Lewis wrote these words in ‘On Stories’ (1947) in which he discusses the art of story and story elements such as those that make up boys’ adventure stories. He recalled from his own childhood reading experience that ‘I wanted not the momentary suspense but that whole world to which it belonged’ (Lewis, 1982b, p27). Thus whilst this ‘world’ was not necessarily what others desired from story, for Lewis it was ‘The “Redskinnery”’ (Lewis, 1982b, p27) associated with a Red Indian story that he craved.

Considering various stories Lewis drew a contrast between dangers used to increase excitement in a story and the quality of elements that are not simply adding to the danger but imparting the ‘mythological’ (Lewis, 1982b, p32). This is more like ‘the idea which has kept you enthralled’ (Lewis, 1982b, p33) and can be considered as the ‘contemplative object’ (Lewis, 1982b, p33) in the minds of readers. Readers considering the ‘contemplative object’ (ibid., p33) can appreciate the description of a dangerous situation in a story whilst a man genuinely in danger is too concerned with survival. It is ‘the deeper imagination’ (Lewis, 1982b, p34) with which Lewis is concerned in ‘On Stories’ and he maintained that this often exists in tension with mere events or plot sequence. Plot is perceived by Lewis to be ‘only really a net whereby to catch something else. The real theme may be ... something other than a process and much more like a state or quality’ (Lewis, 1982b, p42). For Lewis art resembles life in this sense of sequence and something non-sequential, and the images evoked are for him often more important than mundane plotting. In life and art it was his fervent wish to ‘grasp at a state’ (Lewis, 1982b, p44) although when he attempted to do so he was countered because he found ‘only a succession of events in which the state is never quite embodied’ (Lewis, 1982b, p44). It is my contention that this desire for the higher state is precisely why Lewis turned to great myth in his work *Perelandra*. In ‘Myth Became Fact’ (1944) Lewis suggested that ‘In the enjoyment of a great myth we come nearest to experiencing as a concrete what can otherwise be understood only as an

abstraction' (Lewis, 1944a, p42). Cassirer goes further, 'The mythical world is concrete ... because it excludes and repels all merely abstract factors' (Cassirer, 1955, p24). For Lewis what is tasted is a universal principle that cannot be stated without returning to the realm of abstraction, 'It is only while receiving the myth as a story that you experience the principle concretely' (Lewis, 1944a, p43). With great myth we have more than simply a succession of events, it also imparts the atmosphere or state of the mythical.

This chapter will demonstrate that immersion in mythical consciousness is the dominant quality of *Perelandra*. *Perelandra*'s 'net of successive moments' has broad parallels to the myth of Eden in which man suffers expulsion from Paradise. In the Bible the fruit of 'the tree of knowledge of good and evil' (Genesis, 2:9) is forbidden and the relation of eating and knowledge became equated,

And the Lord God commanded the man (Adam), saying, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die (Genesis, 2:16-17).

In *Perelandra* taste also becomes 'something more than it was on Earth: it gave knowledge as well as pleasure, though not a knowledge that can be reduced to words' (Lewis, 1989, p291). The Bible explains that the 'serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature' (Genesis, 3:1) and tells Eve she will not die through eating the forbidden fruit but instead 'your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil' (Genesis, 3:5). In Milton's retelling of the Eden myth, in *Paradise Lost* Book IX, he suggests that Satan 'enters into the serpent sleeping' (Milton, 1993, p197). Finding Eve alone, he flatters her and surprises her with his power of human speech, a fact that the serpent attributes to its eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree. After many arguments the serpent eventually tempts Eve into tasting the forbidden fruit and later, for love of her, Adam decides to eat the fruit and 'to perish with her' (Milton, 1993, p198). Temptation is a strong element in many of Lewis' works. For example it is embodied in the tempter figure of the Witch who offers Digory the forbidden apple of life in the paradise garden in Chapter Thirteen of *The Magician's Nephew*. In *Perelandra* the tempter figure is the devilish Un-man who results from Satan entering into the body of Ransom's enemy Professor Weston. *Perelandra* reworks the Eden myth of temptation, transgression and knowledge.

Rollo May maintains that the tale of Adam and Eve projects the timeless myth of 'the birth and development of human consciousness' (May, 1993, p27). The basic pattern of the Eden myth is of paradisaal innocence subjected to temptation leading to transgression of a prohibition that results in a new consciousness of knowledge, namely an understanding of evil through sin. Lewis' return to the myth of Eden for the pattern of *Perelandra* implies that he wanted his readers to experience this mythic pattern in order to receive the Event² the myth imparts. Although *Perelandra's* plot may strongly parallel that of Eden, it is not simply a re-run of the Fall that the Biblical myth relates.³ Ultimately Lewis subverts the pattern of the Fall myth by having Ransom kill the Un-man and thus end the protracted trial of temptation to which the Green Lady, the Perelandran 'Eve', is subjected. The prohibition placed upon the Perelandran Adam and Eve is then lifted (see below). In Lewis' view man experienced a real loss through the Fall because expulsion from God's garden also meant being cast out of the paradisaal state of existence.

The adoption of the Eden pattern for *Perelandra* provides Lewis with more than a simple story to expound his ideas of consciousness and knowledge, it also provided him with a way to evoke the sacral. Cassirer considered the operation of the sacral and religious upon mythical consciousness, suggesting that there is a tension between 'The original mythical concept of holiness' (Cassirer, 1955, p79) and the general view of religion involving 'ethical purity' (Cassirer, 1955, p79). The sacred and the profane are established as a fundamental opposition in mythical thought for Cassirer and he observed that 'The further back we follow it (consciousness) toward its origins, the less the content of religious consciousness can be distinguished from that of mythical consciousness' (Cassirer, 1955, p239). Following from Cassirer's conclusions an intertwining of these different modes of consciousness ensues from primordial man, this intertwining separating as consciousness progresses through time to the present.⁴ For the Green Lady of *Perelandra* no such separation has occurred. She lives in a world which is fundamentally different to Earth because no Fall has taken place there. If the Un-man can induce her to transgress against God then another Fall will occur. This is the kernel of *Perelandra*. It is thus set in a world where consciousness remains to be differentiated. Thus here, perhaps more than any other Lewis' fiction, we can see his notions of myth laid bare because myth is realised as a concrete on *Perelandra*. The 'order of reality'

(Manlove, 1975, p118) on *Perelandra* has a specific consequence for myth because, ever since he first visited another world, 'Ransom had been perceiving that the triple distinction of truth from myth and of both from fact was purely terrestrial - was part and parcel of that unhappy division between soul and body which resulted from the Fall' (Lewis, 1989, p273). For Lewis the Fall and expulsion to the profane realm of Earthly existence meant mankind needed to be 'saved' through the visitation of God Incarnate in Jesus Christ. Thus the 'triple distinction' (ibid., p273) may not be final, 'The Incarnation had been the beginning of its disappearance' (Lewis, 1989, p274). Christ's sacrifice on the cross was made for the benefit of mankind. However, on *Perelandra* the Green Lady has yet to give in to temptation and thus to bring about a Fall similar to that recounted in the Eden myth. The prohibition placed upon her by Maleldil, (an aspect of God, see Lewis, 1989, p338) is not to avoid the consumption of a forbidden fruit as happens in the Eden myth, but to remain on the floating islands of *Perelandra* and not to sleep on the planet's Fixed Land. In the culmination of *Perelandra* it is learnt that there are two islands on *Perelandra*. Only one is forbidden them in order to 'lead them to this their destined throne' (Lewis, 1989, p330) on top of the Holy mountain on the unforbidden land. At the end of the novel the Green Lady finally realises why the prohibition came about, 'why should I desire the Fixed except to make sure - to be able on one day to command where I should be the next and what should happen to me? ... to put in our own power what times should roll towards us' (Lewis, 1989, p335). However this is only realised late in the story, for the majority of the narrative the prohibition serves to replace the forbidden apple of Eden myth. Through their adventures the King and Queen of *Perelandra* realise they 'have learned of evil, though not as the Evil One wished us to learn' (Lewis, 1989, p335). The Un-man wishes them to learn of evil by committing it, whereas Lewis seeks to show that a truer knowledge of evil comes not through doing evil but by being aware of it whilst remaining outside it. In Lewis' view to remain on the Fixed Land, as the Un-man encourages, is to stand outside the good that God provides and to adopt fixity and a self apart from God.⁵

In *Perelandra* Lewis created islands that undulate with the ocean swells upon which they drift, the land of these islands therefore being in a perpetual state of fluidity. Cassirer's theoretics of the inner, subjective, world of mental organisation are concerned with how consciousness resolves the fluidity of sensory impressions.⁶ Lewis

uses the floating islands to undermine or deny the security of the empirical worldview. Ransom does not experience the normal mode of perceiving reality because myth is concrete on Perelandra and this strongly relates to Lewis' use of dream and enchantment (see below). Lewis' undulating landscape achieves the effect of unsettling Ransom's way of initially differentiating what is constant from the unceasingly varying. In Cassirer's view for myth 'thing and signification, are undifferentiated, because they merge, grow together, concreate in an immediate unity' (Cassirer, 1955, p24).

Ransom's encounter with the lack of fixity is described thus,

the forest landscape furnished what would have been a dozen landscapes on Earth - now level wood with trees as vertical as towers, now a deep bottom where it was surprising not to find a stream (Lewis, 1989, p180).

Although Ransom is in one landscape his experience is similar to being bombarded by a series of photographs of different landscapes (see Lewis, 1989, p178). For Cassirer, 'myth, as an original mode of *configuration*, raises a certain barrier against the world of passive sense impression' (Cassirer, 1955, p24). We have to realise that in Perelandra the environment is not simply given and Ransom's experience leaves 'a faint apprehension that his reason might be in danger. There was something in Perelandra that might overload a human brain' (Lewis, 1989, p180).

To discuss mythical consciousness is to talk about a quality of mind, a characteristic of many that contribute to the workings of the mind.⁷ Theoretically mythical consciousness emerges through mythical thinking which is a modality of thought within the mind, whether that mind is primitive or modern.⁸ Modern man is supposedly less steeped in mythical consciousness than primitive or primordial man because of the separation described previously and the dominance of scientific and logical thought processes over the mythical. Cassirer looked to primitive mentalities for his delineation of the characteristics of mythical consciousness. Primitive or primal mentalities suggest minds unsullied by modern modes of abstract thinking and are thus more direct or immediate than those of 'civilised' man. Ransom is a product of human civilisation. He is a philologist who has been brought by order of Maleldil to Venus in order to prevent the machinations of Satan. He discovers the planet to be a paradisaal world, acknowledging that he has 'lived in Paradise' (Lewis, 1989, p281), specifically observing this quality in the floating islands that are described as 'floating paradises,

where every grove dropped sweetness' (Lewis, 1989, p231) in contrast to the 'barren rock' (Lewis, 1989, p231) of the Fixed Land. Animals here do not fear man and food is plentiful in the form of gourds that quench the thirst with 'child-like innocence' (Lewis, 1989, p181). This is 'a pleasure so intense and almost so spiritual' (Lewis, 1989, p181) that Ransom's reason is 'all in favour of tasting this miracle again ... Yet something seemed opposed to this "reason"' (Lewis, 1989, p181). The intensity of the initial experience is so complete that repetition would be 'a vulgarity' (Lewis, 1989, p181). The notion of reason being opposed suggests that Ransom cannot be 'in' the 'higher' mythical reality without reducing the barriers posed by reason and the way reason works in the minds of fallen man. He cannot live in this mentally more unified environment without the terrestrial divisions of the mind being broken down.⁹ Seeing this strange island environment 'He recognised the garden of the Hesperides at once' (Lewis, 1989, p182). Since there is no 'triple distinction' on Perelandra the mythical garden exists as fact here whilst still being a myth, rather as Christ's death and resurrection on Earth is a myth become fact for Lewis. Ransom enters the environment of Perelandra and swims to the nearest floating island after Maleldil's coffin shaped transportation container dissolves into foam. His naked arrival in the waters of Perelandra baptises him into the new environment.

In Ransom's waking vision of Perelandra 'he saw reality, and thought it was a dream' (Lewis, 1989, p182). Trees have heraldic colours and a dragon coils about the 'stem' (ibid., p182) of one. Feelings of 'extreme comfort and some trance-like quality' (Lewis, 1989, p182) keep him transfixed by this vision. He finds himself under an enchantment that means he 'had a sensation not of following an adventure but of enacting a myth' (Lewis, 1989, p185). To enact a myth suggests engagement with ritual¹⁰ and the emotional immediacy of myth and supernatural religion dominate otherwise objective or rational views of events. The reader has to follow the enactment and thus we realise that this is not just a 'story' we are following but a myth we are receiving into our consciousness. For Ransom 'To be the figure that he was in this unearthly pattern appeared sufficient' (Lewis, 1989, p185). This unearthly pattern is mythic and involves enchantment and a curiously different sensation to the experience of reality for people on Earth, 'something happened to him which perhaps never happens to a man until he is out of his own world' (Lewis, 1989, p182). He has not

merely travelled to another world but also entered into a sacral environment and the author raises our consciousness to the experience of that environment. Ransom's experience of other worlds causes him to ponder 'Were all the things which appeared as mythology on Earth scattered through other worlds as realities?' (Lewis, 1989, p183). This is a crucial point for understanding the relevance of Cassirer to a new appreciation of Lewis. Cassirer studied myth as a symbolic form, drawing his conclusions from primitive cultures and the distant past of human development. For primitive consciousness he proposed that

the basic mythical conceptions ... present the *totality* of Being. The mythical form of conception is not something super-added to certain definite *elements* of empirical existence; instead, the primary "experience" itself is steeped in the imagery of myth and saturated with its atmosphere (Cassirer, 1953b, pp. 9-10).

In this rarefied way 'Man lives with *objects* only in so far as he lives with these *forms*; he reveals reality to himself, and himself to reality, in that he lets himself and the environment enter into this plastic medium, in which the two do not merely make contact, but fuse with each other' (Cassirer, 1953b, p10). Cassirer's view of mythical conception and subject/object fusion is a theory of myth that is applicable to the way that Lewis evokes his Perelandran environment in order to suggest movement not simply to another planet but progression towards greater reality through his fusion of myth, truth and fact.

Cassirer's notions of myth and environment have a particular pertinence for Perelandra because he proposed that mythical consciousness has a distinctly biological emphasis, 'the mythical consciousness imprints the form of life on everything it lays hold of' (Cassirer, 1985, Vol. 3, p71). The world of Perelandra also has a biological life quality. When Ransom has fought and killed the Un-man he lies wounded in a cave that is reminiscent of a womb and in this recuperative environment he is 'breast-fed by the planet Venus' (Lewis, 1989, p314) and has a sense of experiencing 'a second infancy' (Lewis, 1989, p314). He felt 'unweaned till he moved from that place' (Lewis, 1989, p314). In this episode he thus returns to a child-like spirituality. In 'The Rediscovery of Meaning' (1961) Lewis' friend, the philosopher Owen Barfield, commented that Cassirer saw the development of human consciousness as the 'gradual extrication of a small, but a growing and an increasingly clear and self-determined focus of inner human

experience from a dreamlike state of virtual identity with the *life* of the body and its environment' (Barfield, 1977b, p16). Ransom returns to this condition during his 'second infancy' in the cave on Perelandra, which is 'a time to be remembered only in dreams as we remember infancy' (Lewis, 1989, p314). The Green Lady's 'I' or self also has to be delineated from the undifferentiated environs of Perelandra as she experiences them. Perelandra can be considered as the physical body of its tutelary spirit, the planetary Archon or Oyarsa called Perelandra, as Ransom learns during his encounter with the Oyéresu (the plural of Oyarsa). The King, or Adam, of Perelandra realises that it is the Oyarsa Perelandra 'whose hand it was that we saw in the long waves and the bright islands and whose breath delighted us in the wind at morning' (Lewis, 1989, p333). Malacandra and Perelandra are more than just ancient steersmen of their worlds, they are the souls of their respective planets and thus they are the spiritual life of their planetary environs. It is thus a landscape with a soul that Lewis evokes. Earth is viewed as the 'Wounded World' (Lewis, 1989, p343) whose Oyarsa is Satan. It is redeemed in Christ's Incarnation and sacrifice because 'In the Fallen World He prepared for Himself a body and was united with the Dust and made it glorious for ever' (Lewis, 1989, p341). This theme emerges in other works by Lewis. For example a similar transmutation is attributed to stars in *The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader"* (see Lewis, 1990b, p158-9). In this novel stars take human form and rest until the cycle of time returns them to a state of childhood ready for rebirth and thus reincarnation into the heavens, 'And when I have become as young as the child that was born yesterday, then I shall take my rising again (for we are at earth's eastern rim) and once more tread the great dance' (Lewis, 1990b, p159).

After her trials with the Un-man, the Queen and the King are invested with dominion over their planet, just as Genesis records the same gift bestowed upon the terrestrial Adam (see Genesis, 1:26). The Perelandran Adam, now proclaimed Tor-Oyarsa-Perelendri, looks to the future of his race and foresees a distant time when their bodies 'will not always be bodies bound to the Low Worlds' (Lewis, 1989, p337). For Cassirer the bond between body and soul is an 'original mythical-religious conception' (Cassirer, 1985, Vol. 3, p102) that maintains a bond despite body and soul being 'different in essence and origin, (because they) remain intimately linked by their destiny' (Cassirer, 1985, Vol. 3, p102). There is an opposition between 'the essence of

both' (Cassirer, 1985, Vol. 3, p103) and Cassirer observes that 'By a primordial decree of fate, the soul is confined to the cycle of corporeal becoming, fastened to the "wheel of births"' (Cassirer, 1985, Vol. 3, p102). In *Perelandra* Lewis offers the hope of a solution by proposing that an ultimate transcendence from corporeal existence is achievable for the unfallen Perelandran people through 10,000 years of obedience to God. He thus makes a similar connection between the soul/body problem and its transcendent destiny that not only echoes Cassirer's notion but is also vaguely reminiscent of Barfield's idea of 'final participation' and the soul's eventual journey out of matter. These Cassirean notions emerge in Volume 3 of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, a copy of which was owned by Lewis and in which various passages are underlined.¹¹ It is Volume 3 that contains Cassirer's conclusions concerning myth and the phenomenology of knowledge.¹²

Another example of Cassirer's 'plastic medium' of man and environment emerges in the Green Lady's attitude to her world. For Ransom home is 'where people live together and have their possessions and bring up their children' (Lewis, 1989, p201). In contrast the Green Lady 'spread out her hands to indicate all that was in sight. "This is my home," she said' (Lewis, 1989, p201). She thinks of her world in a singularly different way to Ransom, seeing no danger in the environment of the floating islands although to Ransom they are uncertain and continually changing because of the ever shifting movement of the ocean beneath them.¹³ Her trust reflects her faith in Maleldil who provides her with inner security. She is attuned to her environment like a primitive equatorial Earth nomad, not tied to any particular area for food or security, and the entire world is like a womb or nursery for the Perelandran man and woman.

Cassirer proposed that 'The earliest human consciousness to which we can go back must be conceived as a divine consciousness, a consciousness of God' (Cassirer, 1955, p7). The Green Lady is conscious of Maleldil and hears His words (see above), suggesting monotheism. However, for Cassirer 'without the solicitation to polytheism, there would have been no advance to true monotheism' (Cassirer, 1955, p7). The mythology of the pagan gods is viewed as leading to one God above and beyond all things. Lewis incorporated the 'lesser' gods of pagan mythology into his cosmic hierarchy, including them as the Oyarsa of their respective planets. The Oyéresu explain that 'the gods walked ceaselessly around the fields of Arbol' (Lewis, 1989, p342) and

they pay homage to Maleldil. This is an invitingly mythical conception that recalls Cassirer's view that in mythical consciousness 'There is nowhere an "it" as a dead object, a mere thing' (Cassirer, 1985, Vol. 3, p71). It is also worth noting Cassirer's notion that

myth strives for a hierarchy of forces and gods. The world becomes more intelligible in proportion as its parts are assigned to the various gods, as special spheres of material reality and human activity are placed under the guardianship of particular deities (Cassirer, 1955, p62).

On Venus the Oyarsa Perelandra, or planetary deity, is described by the King as their 'fair foster mother' (Lewis, 1989, p333) and even after their eventual trial and attainment of the knowledge of good and evil and the proclamation of the King and Queen's dominion over the planet, the King beseeches Perelandra to 'remain with us, both for the love we bear you and also that you may strengthen us with counsel and even with your operations' (Lewis, 1989, p333). In Cassirer's phenomenology of mythical consciousness the relation of soul to man is recognised as not necessarily 'a spirit of nature but as a *tutelary* spirit' (Cassirer, 1955, p168), and he noted examples in Greek, Roman, Finnish and Old Celtic mythology. Whilst the tutelary spirit can be 'the souls of various objects' (Cassirer, 1955, p168),¹⁴ in Roman myth 'the *lares* ... are friendly spirits which bear a certain individual stamp, which are bound up with a particular person or place, house or field, and protect it from harmful influences' (Cassirer, 1955, p168). For Lewis' fiction the Oyarsa of Perelandra has many aspects or identifications, being Aphrodite, Venus, essential femininity and spiritual love as well as serving a guardian role. The appearance of the Oyéresu is changeable and only an aspect generated by their 'directly manipulating the relevant parts of our brain' (Lewis, 1989, p326). In one of their appearances Ransom notes that 'their faces were as "primitive", as unnatural, if you like, as those of archaic statues from Aegina' (Lewis, 1989, p326) and Venus 'glowed with a warm splendour, full of the suggestion of teeming vegetable life' (Lewis, 1989, p326). All this supports a primitive view of the Oyéresu in contrast to their more angelic manifestations, and suggests Lewis' attempt to fuse or surmount the tension between original mythical conceptions and the more ethical sense associated with Christian myth's angelic orders.

Living in the more ‘plastic medium’ of an environment composed of fused myth and fact means that the Green Lady’s mythological nature extends beyond her perceptions of things through her primal innocence, she must also be recognised as mythological herself. Thus as Eve was the ancient progenitress of mankind, the Green Lady is ‘the Mother’ (Lewis, 1989, p202) on Perelandra, the archetypal original Mother of her race since no Perelandran mother exists prior to her. Similarly the King of Perelandra ‘is the Father’ (Lewis, 1989, p202). In Ransom’s early experience of the Green Lady, he realises that ‘There was no category in the terrestrial mind which would fit her. Opposites met in her and were fused in a fashion for which we have no images’ (Lewis, 1989, p200). She defies the ability of art to portray her, being simultaneously ‘young ... a goddess ... a Madonna ... at any moment she might laugh like a child, or run like Artemis or dance like a Maenad’ (Lewis, 1989, p200).¹⁵ When she stands with the King in the novel’s culmination the pair are hailed by Perelandra as ‘Oyarsa-Perelendri, the Adam, the Crown, Tor and Tinidril, Baru and Baru’ah, Ask and Embla, Yatsur and Yatsurah’ (Lewis, 1989, p333).¹⁶ Until that epiphany the Oyarsa of Perelandra is Venus, or Aphrodite as known in Earth myth, and the feminine essence, whilst the Martian Archon is Malacandra, Mars or Ares (see Lewis, 1989, p328) and is essential masculinity. Each Archon is the Voice of their respective planet. In the culmination of *Perelandra*, after Ransom’s convalescence from his struggle with the Un-man, his vision of the King and Queen makes him believe that he is witnessing ‘Paradise itself in its two Persons, Paradise walking hand in hand, its two bodies shining in the light like emeralds’ (Lewis, 1989, p331). There is a sense of gender removed to a higher reality revealing, in Ransom’s confrontation with the masculine and feminine Archons, ‘a fundamental polarity which divides all created beings’ (Lewis, 1989, p327). Thus whilst the Archons are sexless they remain quintessentially masculine and feminine because for Lewis ‘Gender is a reality, and a more fundamental reality than sex’ (Lewis, 1989, p327).

With myth established as fact on Perelandra, its function as a symbolic form can be explored. Cassirer analysed myth as a symbolic form, concisely encapsulated by Schultz, ‘a “symbolic form” is a worldview or perspective made through a type of symbolism; the main “image worlds” (*PSF* II, 25) are myth, language, science, and art among others’ (Schultz, 2000, p4) {see also my previous chapter}. Each of these

examples is a symbolic form for Cassirer, and each is an inner world for man. Cassirer's 'worlds' are internal to the mind, they are worlds that are formed through the addition of mental attributes to the images received from the external perceptual world. For the symbolic form of myth feeling is fundamental to the mythical consciousness.¹⁷ Thus Cassirer theorised about the subjective interior of human consciousness, and it is within this internal mental domain that his theoretics define myth. Cassirer was not a proponent of the copy theory of knowledge that suggests that man simply sees something outside himself and that image is all there is.¹⁸ Instead he considered that the mind adds to the image and builds information into a system of knowledge. Lewis' fantasy worlds are put into our consciousness when we read them. The author creates worlds in our thoughts that are structured to evoke a sympathy with the mythical consciousness. Through experiencing mythical consciousness the mind can be opened to the sacral, and freed from the limitations of the materialist empiricist mentality of believing only what can be visually perceived. For Ransom seeing is also feeling. He experiences 'sight' beyond the visual medium, mentioning colours that are not really 'visible' colours that he perceives in the form of life (see Lewis, 1989, Ch. 3, pp. 170-171). Fantasy works invite the reader to suspend their disbelief and to engage with what Tolkien termed a secondary world.¹⁹ In these worlds myth can take concrete form in contrast to the view of myth as unreal in the primary world of normal experience.

Lewis' hero explores the Hesperidean garden of Perelandra during the course of the story's 'enactment' and discovers creatures that would be recognisably mythical back on Earth, such as the Hesperidean dragon of the floating islands. Similarly the singing creature of the Fixed Land is the personification of the song of the wood. This being possesses 'fawn-like shyness' (Lewis, 1989, p319) and shuns contact with man and prefers to live in its own 'world'. It wants 'to be for ever a sound and only a sound in the thickest centre of untravelled woods' (Lewis, 1989, p319). The creation of worldviews and image worlds in Perelandra is an organisation through the symbolic form of myth, and applying Cassirer's theory directs our attention to the operation of worldview, imagery and the evocation of mythical consciousness. For example, when Ransom encounters the 'swimming submen or mermen' (Lewis, 1989, p290) who live beneath the Perelandran oceans, the encounter is like being 'in a dream' (Lewis, 1989, p290). Evoking the dream-state is a way to suggest the loss of differentiation, and

primal thought processes suggest to Cassirer that mythical consciousness has an ‘immediate and undifferentiated unity’ (Cassirer, 1955, pxv). Through her early conversations with Ransom the Green Lady becomes aware of other states of existence that are not so sacral and mythic as hers and realises that ‘all my life now seems to have been a kind of sleep’ (Lewis, 1989, p204). The relation of dream and myth is a key characteristic of mythical thought for Cassirer. The ‘crucial significance of dream experience in the genesis and growth of mythical consciousness’ (Cassirer, 1955, p36) suggests to Cassirer that mythical thinking

lacks any fixed dividing line between mere “representation” and “real” perception, between wish and fulfillment, between image and thing ... for mythical thinking and mythical “experience” there is always a hovering between the world of dream and the world of objective reality (Cassirer, 1955, p36).

Whilst Ransom provides *Perelandra* with a datum for objective reality, his tale is related to the reader by the even more objective ‘Lewis’ narrator to whom Ransom confides his story. However Ransom is continually ‘hovering between the world of dream’ on *Perelandra*²⁰ and his recollections of the experience of terrestrial, or ‘objective’, reality. The narrator describes Ransom’s experience thus, ‘Those who have had a dream which is very beautiful but from which, nevertheless, they have ardently desired to awake, will understand his sensations’ (Lewis, 1989, p198). When Ransom sleeps on the Fixed Land he has ‘a disturbed and dreamful sleep’ (Lewis, 1989, p232), his waking is ‘unlike all previous wakings in the world of Venus, that for a moment he supposed himself back on Earth’ (Lewis, 1989, p232).

Our own experience is generally one of sleeping on the Fixed Land. However, the experiences of Ransom’s life on the floating paradise islands is like a ‘dream (for so it seemed to him) of having lived and walked on the oceans of the Morning Star’ (Lewis, 1989, p232). His waking here is not quite the same as having waked on Earth only ‘jolly nearly the same as having waked from a dream’ (Lewis, 1989, p232). Thus, when Ransom encounters the mermen out on the ocean, the experience is not terrifying, as might be expected of such an encounter. Instead such fear is bypassed ‘as sometimes happens to us in a dream’ (Lewis, 1989, p290). The real surprise is the realisation of the state of mind he is in, ‘With a shock he realised that he was not dreaming, but awake’ (Lewis, 1989, p290). Looking into the mermen’s faces Ransom realises that ‘They were

more like human faces asleep, or faces in which humanity slept while some other life, neither bestial nor diabolic, but merely elvish, out of our orbit, was irrelevantly awake' (Lewis, 1989, p235). Theirs is an underwater world and Ransom becomes 'conscious of his own experience in walking on the topside of them as a miracle or a myth' (Lewis, 1989, p291). Although existing on the same planet as the Green Lady they are wholly removed from man. Ransom describes his encounter with the mermen in a curious way, 'They met as the branches of different trees meet when the wind brings them together' (Lewis, 1989, p290). Unless the mermen are a mere indulgence on Lewis' part, the question arises as to why Lewis goes to all the trouble of realising as concrete on Perelandra what are mythical beings on Earth. This is a mythologising, on Lewis' part, of another world, but it is also an encounter with mythical worldviews after the manner that primordial man is considered by theorists to have felt the world to be imbued with mythical creatures.

Ransom sees the world of the Green Lady as a human orientated one and the world of the mermen as an aquatic one, separate from man. His second encounter with these beings occurs during his pursuit of the Un-man on the back of a great fish. This pursuit is a gruelling test of his endurance in which hunger drives him to eat the seaweed food of the mermen. This experience causes him to relinquish his grasp on the human world of the Green Lady, and all her concerns are found to be 'rapidly fading from his mind, as a dream fades when we wake, or as if it were shouldered aside by a whole world of interests and emotions to which he could give no name. It terrified him' (Lewis, 1989, p292). He throws back the rest of the weed 'In spite of his hunger' (Lewis, 1989, p292) because to continue eating would mean giving up everything that he thinks is important to his human worldview. There is an element of the transforming power of myth in this description of his change of consciousness from the human, civilised worldview to the fact of the mythical. Ransom's experience with the food of the mermen is thus the crossover to a mythical worldview from a human one. The crossover to that worldview is prepared for through Ransom's dream-like state, his vision of the merman's face with its mythological appearance (see also Lewis, 1989, p290) and also through the realisation of myth as fact on other worlds. It is also a classic case of the 'mythical law of "participation"' (Cassirer, 1955, p64), a term coined by Lévy-Bruhl, in which 'The whole is the part, in the sense that it enters into it with its

whole mythical-substantial essence' (Cassirer, 1955, p64). Thus just a taste of the seaweed lets in the whole world of the mermen. The episode of Ransom's encounter with the myth world of the Mermen also has a resonance with Cassirer's assertion that myth lives through the 'presence of its object' (Cassirer, 1955, p35), through the instant when consciousness is possessed and seized by it with a curious intensity. Ransom is subjected to the immediacy of a mythical worldview when he participates in that world by eating what nourishes the mermen, thus briefly taking on the myth world of the Mermen. In essence he begins to think as they do and relinquish all the importance he attaches to the symbols and images that build up his human worldview. Similarly the reader's sublimation to mythical consciousness has been prepared for through our tasting of the Eden myth. The myth evokes the feeling that in some way we already 'know' what is to come as though we were linked into a way of knowing that is like a race memory.

This sense of knowing emerges through the type of thought that myth evokes. For Barfield 'the mythopoeic imagination ... can lift the modern consciousness to a mythic plane' (Tennyson, 1999, pxxxii) and for Cassirer although 'The modern poet often looks back at the mystical, the "divine" or "heroic" ages, as at a lost paradise ... it is one of the greatest privileges of art that it can never lose this "divine age" ' (Cassirer, 1972, p153). This was the age that Schiller saw as imparting an emotive, 'inner life' to objects. It was a 'golden age of poetry in which all things were still full of gods, in which every hill was the dwelling place of an oread, every tree the home of a dryad' (Cassirer, 1972, p153). Thus we have to reflect that Lewis is creating more than simply another species through peopling Perelandra's ocean with mermen. He is evoking a 'lost paradise' and through it making a connection to the 'environment of minds' (Lewis, 1989, p328) through which man originally came to know the gods. Ransom proposes that this 'environment' is a 'vast whispering gallery' (Lewis, 1989, p328) that ensures the remembrance of higher reality when terrestrial man was part of 'the celestial commonwealth' (Lewis, 1989, p328). That memory means that 'Our mythology is based on a solid reality than we dream' (Lewis, 1989, p328) and thus we are invited to re-think our view of mythology because it is more properly 'gleams of celestial strength and beauty falling on a jungle of filth and imbecility' (Lewis, 1989, p328). There may be greater reality in the early worldview of humanity, but unquestionably understanding

the form of myth provides insight into its construction of symbols, unity, provision of a cosmos and the phenomena of feeling it evokes.

Mythical dialectic is a change in worldview and that is the great achievement of *Perelandra*. The Green Lady's worldview is altered through knowledge and along the way Ransom, and thus the reader, is re-educated into Lewis' principles of religious reality. Lewis' notion of greater reality in mythology has a fundamental resonance with the myth theoretics of Cassirer. Schultz notes that prior to Cassirer

it had been assumed that people have experience through the senses and then they decide to change some of this knowledge by making it mean something different. In Cassirer's terms symbols are "*organs of reality*," meaning that it is only through them that a world can be created (Schultz, 2000, p52).

A symbolic form orders experience according to its 'inner form' (Cassirer, 1955, Vol. 1, p81) and, as Suzanne Langer noted, Cassirer places an 'emphasis on the constitutive character of symbolic renderings in the making of "experience"' (Langer, 1949, p393). For Schultz Cassirer's philosophy 'make(s) symbols constitutive of experience' (Schultz, 2000, p52). Lewis wanted his readers to experience the mythical consciousness through their encounter with *Perelandra* and thus used mythical symbols in a similar Cassirean way as '*organs of reality*' (Cassirer, 1953b, p8) evoking experience. Thus the reader actively engages with the Eden myth by allowing themselves to receive and participate in the state of consciousness the myth evokes.

Ransom's mind has been matured and ordered through his life on Earth. Thus he brings all the mental 'baggage' associated with Earth, such as memories of the world war that is progressing there, and a mind orientated toward logical thought processes, such as cause and effect, that have yielded up the scientific worldview. He has been ingrained with 20th century notions of materialist ownership and identity. For Lewis Ransom presents an objective view of life from the Fallen planet. It is a broken world of selfishness, greed and the pursuit of power and human meanness and these aspects are extensively realised in *That Hideous Strength*. When the scientist Weston sees the Green Lady with Ransom he thinks the worst and jumps to the conclusion that Ransom is seducing her because he is 'a naked civilised man embracing a naked savage woman in a solitary place' (Lewis, 1989, p221). For Weston such seduction is an 'unfortunate way of introducing civilisation to a new planet' (Lewis, 1989, p221). The Green Lady's

simple life of accepting whatever good Maleldil presents to her contrasts with Ransom and particularly Weston's 'civilised' sophistication and notions of materialism, ownership and science. For Lewis, it is 'civilised' man who has lost touch with the most important aspects of existence that have profound meaning for spiritual reality, which was more important to him than survival or material security. Far from being a 'naked savage' the Green Lady is in fact 'a queen' (Lewis, 1989, p203) whilst, in comparison, Ransom considers himself to be 'a commoner' (Lewis, 1989, p203).²¹ Whilst the Green Lady is not a totemistic savage or primitive in the terrestrial sense, the child's and the primitive's experience have similarities (see above). She is primal, unfallen, young in being the first and young in terms of understanding and innocence. Her sense of being in the childhood of her race, and the fact that she is scarcely more than a child in her outlook and mentality, recall a concern of Cassirer's involving 'The question ... whether the play of the child represents for it a veritable reality or merely a conscious occupation with fictions' (Montague, 1949, p366). Montague notes that according to Cassirer this question is 'malposed, since the play of the child, like the Myth, belongs to a phase of consciousness which does not yet understand the distinction between that which is real and that which merely is simply imagined' (Montague, 1949, p366). The eldils can make the minds of Ransom and the King and Queen perceive them in any appearance they choose, but moreover what would be the imagined on Earth such as the mermen are real on Perelandra and this is an inversion of reality and imagination that leads Ransom to question 'were the old myths truer than the modern myths? Had there in truth been a time when satyrs danced in the Italian woods?' (Lewis, 1989, p235), thus suggesting support for the notion of different phases of consciousness in lost ages.

According to the Bible 'The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it' (Genesis, 2:15); in *Paradise Lost* the angel Gabriel is dispatched to guard against Satan's penetration of this protected inner realm wherein dwell the first sinless humans (*P.L.* IV:561-3). A sense of 'inner' innocence emerges in opposition to the 'outward' danger, and this recalls the notion of the subject/object problem. For Cassirer myth was a phase out of which came the gradual delineation of self and subject-object polarisation. For Barfield this polarisation can be observed in language development, and Barfield emphasised etymology in support of his philosophical conclusions. The subject-object problem is fundamentally addressed by

Cassirer's philosophy of symbolic forms because for Cassirer 'the veil of words ... conceals the true essence of things' (Cassirer, 1985, Vol. 3, p2). Removing this veil means that 'we shall find ourselves face to face with the original perceptions which contain the certainties of knowledge' (Cassirer, 1985, Vol. 3, p2). For the symbolic form of myth we have to recognise that something beyond the successive plot events is being imparted, and this includes myth as a worldview.

Myth as worldview is formed through a specific type of thinking process for Cassirer. This can be discerned in the way myth creates its own symbols, the way being 'its logic or inner form' (Schultz, 2000, p55). 'Logic' is a misleading word here because the 'logic' of myth is different from the general view of logical ratiocination (see previous chapter). As Barfield eloquently states, 'it is absurd to imagine such a mind (the primitive's) thinking in terms of cause and effect, and of inference from the one to the other. Rather we are in contact with a different kind of thinking and a different kind of perceiving altogether' (Barfield, 1988, p29). He is referring to the 'prelogical' kind of thinking postulated by Lévy-Bruhl, and it is the genius of Cassirer to attempt a theory about how the peculiar 'logic' of mythical thinking works as a thought process. To reduce this complex philosophy to a blunt literary tool, though reductive, nevertheless offers some insight into Lewis' notion of something emerging beyond the simple successive events of story. This is because 'Myth includes much more than tales, in Cassirer's philosophy. It is a worldview including the acts of forming it and the products' (Schultz, 2000, p56). Cassirer's symbolic form of myth works through mythical symbolism, which Schultz lists as including 'sensations, dreams, actions, percepts, physical objects, tools, cave drawings, natural phenomena, the human body, any living thing, words and sentences, numbers, forms of social organization, rites, myths, and mythology (systems of myths)' (Schultz, 2000, p56). I have sought to reflect on many of these including dream, percepts, objects, body, rite and myth with regard to *Perelandra*. At first the broad range of symbols appears to make any succinct literary study almost impossible, however the most important aspect to note concerning symbols in the symbolic form of myth is that for Cassirer 'the image is the symbol of the mythical consciousness; it forms the basis of all its symbolism' (Schultz, 2000, p71). Thus in contrast to myth theorists Tylor and Frazer, Cassirer and Barfield saw primitive man as more imagist than logical²² and Lewis uses the notion of imagist

communication throughout *Perelandra*, both in the way that the Green Lady thinks and in the images Lewis evokes for the reader. To begin with the Green Lady, we must recognise that she is not conceptual, so when the King says that their ‘sons will make images’ (Lewis, 1989, p337) she responds by asking ‘What are images?’ (Lewis, 1989, p337) because she has no idea of what an image is as an abstract concept. Ransom tells her that he has difficulty explaining the result of Eve’s transgression ‘because you have no image of it in your mind’ (Lewis, 1989, p252). She needs an image, a concrete example imprinted on her thoughts from the actuality of her world, in order to understand. When the Green Lady sees through an argument made by the Un-man she concludes ‘That saying of yours is like a tree with no fruit’ (Lewis, 1989, p237). This creates an image in our minds that equates knowledge with eating and the sensation of taste and pleasure with truth. A tree with no fruit is barren, useless and foretokens the sterility of death. A tree with rotten fruit would suggest fruit that cannot be eaten, whereas a fruiting tree with edible fruit is productive and a source of life-sustaining food. (See Christ’s words in Matthew 7:15-20 and Matthew 12:33.) The image of a fruit tree is something that to the Green Lady is a concrete part of her world whilst, in contrast, the Un-man’s arguments try to convince her that the abstract is really a kind of concrete. The more abstract ways of thought are described by the imagist Green Lady as ‘Stepping out of what is into what might be and talking and making things out there ... alongside the world’ (Lewis, 1989, p237). For Ransom the futility of such thinking is illustrated in his coming to terms with his own God-given task on *Perelandra*. Thus he realises that to persist in ‘hark(ing) back, time after time, to the Book of Genesis, asking “What would have happened?”’ (Lewis, 1989, p275) is futile because he can only deal with the here and now, and the current wave that time has sent. Each wave of time is different from the one that has gone before. Thus to ask what would have happened is ‘meaningless - mere invitations to wander in what the Lady would have called an “alongside world” which had no reality. Only the actual was real: and every actual situation was new’ (Lewis, 1989, p275).

However Ransom also comes to understand that there is a larger pattern beyond the ‘frame of earthly experience’ (Lewis, 1989, p277) and that ‘He had been forced out of the frame and caught up into the larger pattern’ (Lewis, 1989, p277) in his experiences on *Perelandra*. The problem of determinism versus human choice emerges

as a problem Ransom must confront. He can refuse to fight the Un-man and realises that God would then undertake to make good come from evil as He has done on Earth through Christ's sacrifice. However the problem for Lewis is to show that the freedom to choose rests with Ransom despite his pre-destined fate and sense of being born for this struggle.²³ It is the Un-man's ploy to make Ransom question if 'all is without plan or meaning?' (Lewis, 1989, p340) but the 'plan' eventually revealed is bigger and greater than Ransom's limited frames of reference allow him to comprehend. He has to transcend his own limitations through communing with the Oyéresu²⁴ in order to appreciate how the linkages combine in 'the plan of the Great Dance (which has) plans without number interlock(ing), and each movement becomes in its season the breaking into flower of the whole design' (Lewis, 1989, p343).

Whilst the Green Lady is imagist, echoing notions of primal thought processes, it is through her exposure to Ransom and the Un-man that she is introduced to new ways of thought and her growing maturity is the result. This growth in her understanding is even considered by Ransom to possibly be 'part of the Divine plan' (Lewis, 1989, p264) since then her obedience to God would be 'an obedience freer, more reasoned, more conscious than any she had known before' (Lewis, 1989, p264). Thus Lewis is not suggesting that man would be better off mentally returning to some prelogical era, rather *Perelandra* tries to demonstrate how wrong paths of knowledge lead to 'the terrible slavery of appetite and hate and economics and government which our race knows so well' (Lewis, 1989, p265).

The Un-man uses images to evoke mythical thought processes in the Green Lady. He reveals her reflection in a mirror, 'The image of her beautiful body had been offered to her only as a means to awake the far more perilous image of her great soul' (Lewis, 1989, p270). The Un-man also relates stories to beguile her. Ransom concludes that 'What emerged from the stories was rather an image than an idea' (Lewis, 1989, p257). This is the image of tragic women figures who endure risk, suffering and social ostracism for a supposedly justifiable transgression. These figures become 'goddess shapes' (Lewis, 1989, p257) and the Un-man's arguments to tempt the Green Lady into defying God present a 'turgid swell of indistinctly splendid images' (Lewis, 1989, p265) such that, despite her innocence, Ransom realises that 'half her imagination was already filled with bright, poisonous shapes' (Lewis, 1989, p265). The Un-man's

images are not passive but attitude laden, the 'goddess shapes' they release into the Green Lady's consciousness suggests a parallel with the operation of the image as a symbol in mythical consciousness that Cassirer describes in his *Language and Myth* (1946).²⁵ This may be unintentional or design, but either way there is the suggestion of a similar sense of myth as more than story and thus more like an activity in consciousness for both Lewis and Cassirer. In Cassirer's theory it is from the mass of perception that myth focuses 'all forces on a single point ... the entire self is given up to a single impression, is "possessed" by it' (Cassirer, 1953b, p33), whilst tension is also maintained between subject and object. In this way,

external reality is not merely viewed and contemplated, but overcomes a man in sheer immediacy, with emotions of fear or hope, terror or wish fulfillment: then the spark jumps somehow across, the tension finds release, as the subjective excitement becomes objectified, and confronts the mind as a god or a daemon (Cassirer, 1953b, p33).

Lewis' 'goddess shapes' recall the workings of Spieth's consciousness theory and the 'moment (when) a Trö is born in ... consciousness' (Spieth in Cassirer, 1953b, p34). However, other images in *Perelandra* suggest a broad adherence to the operation that Cassirer described. Thus there is a sense of initial 'possession' by the impression in many of the images Lewis created. These include the moment when the 'Lewis' narrator confronts an eldil at the beginning of *Perelandra* and the image of the Un-man talking to the Green Lady, 'the tableau revealed by the lightning had photographed itself on his brain' (Lewis, 1989, p258). The Un-man himself causes Ransom to be 'chilled with an inarticulate, night-nursery horror of the thing he had to deal with - the managed corpse, the bogey, the Un-man' (Lewis, 1989, p254).

In contrast to images Lewis uses to play upon fear, the image of the floating islands evokes

The cord of longing which drew him to the ... isle (which) seemed to him at that moment to have been fastened long, long before his coming to Perelandra, long before the earliest times that memory could recover in his childhood, before his birth, before the birth of man himself, before the origins of time (Lewis, 1989, p235).

Here Lewis wants his image of the island paradise to draw our consciousness towards the greater reality that exists in eternity beyond or behind the shadow world of Earthly existence. In his autobiography Lewis called his experience of longing for the unattainable *Sehnsucht* (see Lewis, 1977e, p12) and for Manlove 'It is in *Perelandra* that Lewis is most attempting to evoke *Sehnsucht*' (Manlove, 1975, p110). *Sehnsucht* is equated by Lewis with unattainable mountains, the feelings he obtained of Northerness through reading Norse myths (particularly Longfellow's 'Tegnér's Drapa'), and also has associations with distance. For Lewis *Sehnsucht* has a definite spiritual aspect, 'a longing, ultimately for, and sent by, God' (Manlove, 1975, p110). However associations of idolatry can corrupt the experience evoked through images and thus the Bible teaches iconoclasm and the casting down of graven images lest they should be worshipped rather than God. This danger confronts Ransom when the image of the King's face seizes him so completely that 'You might ask how it was possible to look upon it and not to commit idolatry, not to mistake it for that of which it was the likeness' (Lewis, 1989, p332). Ransom is referring to the face of Christ and he recalls the way 'Plaster images of the Holy One' (Lewis, 1989, p332) attracted 'the adoration they were meant to arouse for the reality' (Lewis, 1989, p332). To avoid this problem Lewis points out that the Perelandran Adam is 'His live image, like Him within and without, made by His own bare hands out of the depth of divine artistry ... it could never be taken for more than an image' (Lewis, 1989, p332) and must be loved for its beauty as a copy, 'an echo, a rhyme, an exquisite reverberation of the uncreated music prolonged in a created medium' (Lewis, 1989, p332).

The symbolic form of myth as worldview is essential to understanding *Perelandra* because in this story the mid-20th century human worldview contends with the mythical. Whilst this is clear from Ransom's encounters with myth worlds as fact (on Mars and Venus) it is also revealed through the way that myth's symbolic form provides structure in mythical consciousness. Cassirer used phenomenological methodology to realise the mythical characteristics associated with, and structural to, space, time and number. Considering the first of these, in mythical consciousness spatial orientation is attitude laden. A sense of mythical orientation emerges during Ransom's ascent of the Holy mountain. The throne of the King and Queen of Perelandra lies in the hidden valley on top of the Holy mountain and Ransom's climbing of the mountain to

meet the Oyéresu is ‘not ... a process but a state’ (Lewis, 1989, p320). In Lewis’ creation the valley is a Holy of Holies, a sacral environment similar to the island of Meldilorn in *Out of the Silent Planet*. The Green Lady’s view that beyond the golden sky of Venus lies Deep Heaven in which worlds such as Perelandra are ‘little lumps of the low swimming in the high’ (Lewis, 1989, p197) also evokes a mythical orientation, promoting an organic sense of space as an ocean or life-filled environment in contrast to the mechanical or scientific view of space as a bleak vacuum. When the Black Archon is defeated Earth will be ‘reunited to the field of Arbol’ (Lewis, 1989, p339). Unlike the men of Earth the King and Queen of Venus do not gaze out from their world directly upon Deep Heaven because the sky of Venus is a ‘golden roof’ (Lewis, 1989, p174) that envelopes the ‘planet of love’ (Lewis, 1989, p174). From the planet’s surface the sky is a mirror reflecting the undulation of the waves beneath so that ‘The queen of those seas views herself continually in a celestial mirror’ (Lewis, 1989, p174). This barrier to the view of Deep Heaven means that the inhabitants of Venus must have more faith for their belief in Deep Heaven than men of Earth. It is the King’s ambition for his people to ‘tear the sky curtain and Deep Heaven shall become familiar to the eyes of our sons as the trees and the waves to ours’ (Lewis, 1989, p338). The sky curtain is a metaphor reinforcing the sense of protected enclosure associated with the sacral garden of the mythical terrestrial Eden. The scale of Venus’ golden canopy makes us appreciate the greater illimitable and encompassing immensity of Deep Heaven itself.

A sense of mythical time emerges on Perelandra since the Green Lady lacks a sense of ‘real’ sequential time when Ransom first meets her. There is no indication of how much time has passed on Perelandra since the King and Queen came into existence. Thus their initial time notions are more like the sense of primordial time, dissociated from terrestrial notions of sequential time.²⁶ However Perelandra’s days of primal innocence are fated to end and progression begins with Ransom’s arrival. The King explains that Ransom’s arrival occurred ‘at that day when the time of our being young drew to its end’ (Lewis, 1989, p334). Cassirer theorised that ‘mythical “primordial time” gradually turns into “real” time, into a consciousness of sequence’ (Cassirer, 1955, p106), and it is through the Green Lady’s encounters with Ransom, the Un-man and the Oyéresu that she finally emerges from mythical consciousness and becomes aware of past and future. Terrestrial notions of a man’s life-span are affected

by Perelandra since Ransom will not be the same after his experience there. The King explains that 'any of his race who has breathed the air that he has breathed and drunk the waters that he has drunk since he came to the Holy mountain will not find it easy to die' (Lewis, 1989, p347). Ransom suspects that he will be like those 'first generations' (Lewis, 1989, p347) expelled from Eden who remained 'long livers, but most take it for only a Story or a Poetry and I had not thought of the cause' (Lewis, 1989, p347). Although Perelandra's innocent inhabitants dwell in the midst of the divine, the true divine age for the King's race is ten thousand years hence (see Lewis, 1989, p338). The Un-man/Weston uses the notion of time as 'the rind - the thin outer skin which we call life' (Lewis, 1989, p297) to suggest God's distance from the kind of time man lives through, (see Lewis, 1989, p297-298). In Lewis' conception of the Great Dance God 'spreads out Time so long and Heaven so deep' (Lewis, 1989, p344). In this way time forms some of the cords that are woven into reality, 'Some of the thinner more delicate cords were beings that we call short-lived: flowers and insects, a fruit or a storm of rain, and once (he thought) a wave of the sea' (Lewis, 1989, p345). Everything is accounted as important in the Great Dance from the mightiest thing to the smallest grain of dust. Thus to God 'Each thing, from the single grain of Dust to the strongest eldil, is the end and the final cause of all creation and the mirror in which the beam of His brightness comes to rest and so returns to Him' (Lewis, 1989, p343).

Cassirer's third structural motif of the mythical world is number and, most importantly for a sense of myth as a form of intuition, number elicits a mythical intuition during Ransom's pursuit of the Un-man across the Perelandran oceans,

The Empirical bogey came surging into his mind - the great myth of our century with its gases and galaxies, its light years and evolutions, its nightmare perspectives of simple arithmetic in which everything that can possibly hold significance for the mind becomes the mere by-product of essential disorder. Always till now he had belittled it, had treated with a certain disdain its flat superlatives, its clownish amazement that different things should be of different sizes, its glib munificence of ciphers. Even now, his reason was not quite subdued, though his heart would not listen to his reason. Part of him still knew that the size of a thing is the least important characteristic, that the material universe derived from the comparing and mythopoeic power within him that

very majesty before which he was now asked to abase himself, and that mere numbers could not overawe us unless we lent them, from our own resources, that awfulness which they themselves could no more supply than a banker's ledger.

But this knowledge remained an abstraction (Lewis, 1989, p293).

In this particular mythical intuition the mind has an experience induced from the form of myth and the type of thought encountered is mythical in character. However, as the last line indicates, this knowledge remains an abstraction for Ransom. Unlike a great myth we are not drawn to realising a principle concretely as Ransom does when he first encounters Perelandra's world and thinks things mythical on Earth are realities here. Both these mythical intuitions suggest that whilst some things that are mythical on Earth are real on Perelandra, others believed real on Earth are revealed as lies here and they can be fought through reason.

The most fundamental numerical development must, inevitably, be the 'distinctions arising from subjective-personal existence, from the relation between I, thou, and he' (Cassirer, 1955, p150). In *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. 1, *Language*, Cassirer observed linguistic expression as a way to view the development of personal human numeric distinctions. It is in this sphere that Cassirer 'considered the part played by basic forms of pure intuition, the forms of space and time, in the development of numbers and plurals' (Cassirer, 1955, Vol. 1, p241). The 'enumerative act' (Cassirer, 1955, Vol. 1, p241) observed in 'pure subjectivity' (Cassirer, 1955, Vol. 1, p242) through language reveals the development of plural nouns and 'languages which have not developed a true plural form of the noun, disclose a plural form of the personal pronoun' (Cassirer, 1955, Vol. 1, p242).²⁷ The word Oyéresu is the plural form of Oyarsa and an Old Solar word. Although the Green Lady speaks Old Solar, Cassirer's notion remains apposite to her development because, when Ransom finds her listening to the Un-man, although 'she was clearly pleased to see him ... her first words revealed that her failure to greet him at his arrival had resulted from her never having envisaged the possibility of a conversation between more than two speakers' (Lewis, 1989, p245). During his early encounters with her Ransom notes that 'it appeared that numbers did not interest her' (Lewis, 1989, p209). She certainly has to come to terms with the numeric distinctions of I, thou, and he in order to develop her sense of self and

‘become, in a sense, more distinct from God and from her husband’ (Lewis, 1989, p264).

It is a fundamental power of myth, for Cassirer, that mythical consciousness lacks differentiation and seeks unity,

the mythical world is thus woven into a whole, this intuitive whole discloses a very different character from that conceptual whole in which cognition strives to comprehend reality ... on the contrary, all reality is smelted down into concrete unifying images ... myth seems to roll up everything it touches into unity without distinction (Cassirer, 1955, p62).

This power of myth emerges as a fundamental substratum of Lewis’ weaving of matter, space, time and thought within his notion of reality as being composed of cords. Each cord may be of something entirely different from the other cords that together make up reality or the cords of reality. This perception of reality emerges during Ransom’s communion with the Oyéresu in which he transcends his normal mode of perception in order to see the Great Dance, although ‘the word “seeing” is now plainly inadequate’ (Lewis, 1989, p344). The Great Dance is composed of cords that are like intertwined light,

leaping over and under one another and mutually embraced in arabesques and flower-like subtleties. Each figure as he looked at it became the master-figure or focus of the whole spectacle, by means of which his eye disentangled all else and brought it into unity - only to be itself entangled when he looked to what he had taken for mere marginal decorations and found that there also the same hegemony was claimed, and the claim made good, yet the former pattern not thereby dispossessed but finding in its new subordination a significance greater than that which it had abdicated (Lewis, 1989, p344).

This drawing into unity with which Lewis describes transcendental reality presents a mythical conception as the underlying truth of things. God is immanent in creation; and time, as noted previously, presents cords that are also woven into this unity. Time, in this sense, provides a deterministic future destiny and a plan too great for man to realise without transcending mortal modes of perception and mental formulation.

Perelandra as myth evokes a powerful spiritual image, and whilst not being literally true it may be considered as “performative”²⁸ of a worldview. The central

notions of Cassirer's symbolic form of myth emerge in *Perelandra* through the construction and formulation of a myth world. We are presented with a world of a higher Platonic order that is qualitatively and quantitatively nearer to reality. Inevitably a movement beyond that myth world emerges in the Green Lady's new understanding of her freedom of choice and the development of her delineation of self from environment. This culminates in her progression into a greater spiritual consciousness which includes an acceptance of the reality of evil along with that of God. However, Lewis also attempts to maintain the strengths of reason, whilst not succumbing to its tyranny, as the mode of thought most associated with modern theoretical ways of understanding, and with the causal structuring associated with the empirical worldview.²⁹

The lack of differentiation encountered on *Perelandra* is a key characteristic of the mythical world because, considered in the pure subjectivity of human thought, this characteristic suggests a lack of distinction between 'I' and 'world', between subjective and objective realms. In this way the use of dream to promote the reduced distinction between inner world and outer world is viewed by Cassirer as having great significance because 'in waking, pure vision is replaced and inhibited by empirical efficacy' (Cassirer, 1985, Vol. 3, p70), thus suggesting that truer vision, or knowing of reality, is attained through the inner world of mythical forms. When contemplating the mythical consciousness we have to appreciate the way it builds 'the personal world ... (and) the world of things' (Cassirer, 1985, Vol. 3, p70) and also its peculiar view of subjectivity. All of these are different to the ways of building and the view of subjectivity that structures the form of theoretical consciousness. For Cassirer, myth 'forms a kind of struggle between I and world' (Cassirer, 1985, Vol. 3, p71) and the result of such a struggle can be observed in the formulation of a new 'I' for the Green Lady. Initially she is mythical and exists within myth on *Perelandra*. The Un-man's use of the Green Lady's mirror image to awaken the image of her soul means that, whilst she existed in a less differentiated state, within the sphere of the mythical world she has to take on the new worldview of being and becoming, sequential time and the growth of her ethical sense through her acknowledgement of self determination. In essence she emerges from being completely in, and of, myth.³⁰

Footnotes

- ¹ In 'C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) and *Perelandra*' in *Modern Fantasy Five Studies* (1975), C.N. Manlove looks at various aspects of innocence in *Perelandra* including its importance, perception, metaphysics, psychology, and also innocence assailed and preserved.
- ² Lewis, C.S., (1996) *Experiment in Criticism*, Cambridge, p47.
- ³ In the Preface to *Perelandra* Lewis rejects allegorical interpretation explaining that 'All the human characters in this book are purely fictitious and none of them is allegorical' (Lewis, 1989, p147). For Lewis allegory allows only one meaning to be drawn whilst myth allows for growth in meaning (see *Lewis Letters*, 1988a, p458). It should also be noted that there are relatively few actual human characters in *Perelandra* since the Perelandran King and Queen are Venusian not human.

Lewis wrote, on 22nd September 1956, to Peter Milward, formerly a student of his who had become a Church father, concerning allegory in the works of Tolkien. Lewis pointed out that for Tolkien a mythopoeic work is an art of sub-creation and thus '*more serious* than an allegory' (Lewis, 1988a, p458). Myth is described as 'higher' than allegory, and myth provides multiple meanings (see Lewis, 1988a, p458) even things people could not become aware of otherwise are reflected, for Lewis, in myth (see Chapter One).
- ⁴ See Schultz, 2000, p179-182.
- ⁵ See 'C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) and *Perelandra*' in *Modern Fantasy Five Studies* (1975) by Manlove, C.N., 1975, p120.
- ⁶ For Cassirer 'What distinguishes empirical reality, the constant core of objective being, from the mere world of representation or imagination, is that in it the permanent is more and more clearly differentiated from the fluid, the constant from the variable' (Cassirer, 1955, p31). See also Cassirer, 1955, p34.

7 In *The Personal Heresy* (1939) Lewis debated with E.M.W. Tillyard concerning claims that a poet's personality can be revealed through analysis of their poems. During this debate Lewis attempted to determine the characteristics involved in 'poetical consciousness' (Lewis, 1965, p146). In Lewis' first essay in this controversy he considered the way that poetry can evoke 'a mood, or a mode of consciousness, created temporarily in the minds of various readers' (Lewis, 1965, p17). For example, Lewis felt that the lines of the third stanza of Walter De la Mare's poem 'All that's Past' present a curious object. The poet wrote,

Very old are we men;
Our dreams are tales
Told in dim Eden
By Eve's nightingales

For Lewis these lines evoke 'something extended interminably in time, shrouded in mystery, and yet, for all its age, carrying still about it some hint of the dewy freshness of primeval myth' (Lewis, 1965, p7).

8 Cassirer, 1953b, p5.

9 This recalls Lewis' assertion that myth became fact in the Incarnation, and his proposal that the myth of Christ 'is directed to the child, the poet, and the savage in us as well as to the conscience and to the intellect. One of its functions is to break down dividing walls' (Lewis, 1974, p138).

10 For Cassirer the participant in a ritual is not simply enacting because mythical thought sees 'real identity' (Cassirer, 1955, p38) instead of representation, and 'mythical *action* ... (sees) a true substantiation' (Cassirer, 1955, p38) effected. Thus for Cassirer rites are not mere copies but 'are absolutely *real*' (Cassirer, 1955, p39) and merge with the reality of action.

11 Lewis' copy of Vol. 3 *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* is now owned by the Wade Centre and is the 1957 Yale University Press edition (New Haven: Connecticut) translated by Ralph Manheim and with an introduction by Charles W. Hendel. (See also my comments in Footnote ⁵² of Chapter Two 'C.S. Lewis, Ernst Cassirer and Myth').

- ¹² The only other Cassirer work known to have belonged to Lewis, now held in the Wade Centre, is *Individuo E Cosmo Nella Filosofia Del Rinascimento* (an Italian translation of *Individuum und Kosmos in der Philosophie der Renaissance*, the English translation of which is *The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy*) in which Cassirer only passingly refers to myth and does not mention myth in connection with the philosophy of symbolic forms.
- ¹³ In literature floating islands often represent uncertainty, as is evident in the wandering islands in Spenser's *Faerie Queene* Bk II, Canto xii, stanza 11. Manlove proposes that 'the floating character of the islands (in *Perelandra*) could have come from Homer, Spenser, or Olaf Stapledon's *Last and First Men*' (Manlove, 1975, p119).
- ¹⁴ The Uitotos view tutelary spirits in this fashion, (see Cassirer, 1955, p168).
- ¹⁵ Jane Harrison explains that the Maenads are 'the women-attendants of Dionysos' (Harrison, 1980, p388), they are his women worshippers and are mostly viewed as either mythological, counterparts of Satyrs, or mad women, or those possessed of the spirit of Dionysos. However, Harrison suggests that 'Their name is the corruption of no tribal name, it represents a state of mind and body, it is almost a cultus-epithet' (Harrison, 1980, p388). Plutarch suggests that they were called, amongst other names, Bacchae in Greece. There are orgiastic overtones involved in the Maenads and for Cassirer the orgiastic dances are about breaking down barriers between man and 'life' (see Cassirer, 1955, p189).
- ¹⁶ In Norse myth Ask and Embla were the first man and woman.
- ¹⁷ For Cassirer, 'nowhere in myth do we find a passive contemplation of things; here all contemplation starts from an attitude, an act of the feeling and will' (Cassirer, 1955, p69). See also Cassirer's chapter on 'The Mythical Consciousness of the Object' in Cassirer, 1955, p29. For feeling see also Cassirer, 1955, p40 and p46. For feeling and rite activity see Cassirer, 1955, p39.
- ¹⁸ Cassirer, 1955, p29. Also Cassirer, E., (1953) *Language and Myth*, trans. Langer, S., Dover Publications inc., p6, and Ashley Montagu, M.F., 'Cassirer on

Mythological Thinking', p362, in Schilpp, P.A., (Ed.) (1949) *The Philosophy of Ernst Cassirer*. See also Barfield, O., (1988) *Saving the Appearances, A Study in Idolatry*, 2nd Ed., Wesleyan University Press, p21.

¹⁹ Tolkien, 1966, p37.

²⁰ George MacDonald's works were a great influence on Lewis, and Manlove notes that MacDonald drew upon Novalis' idea that 'the dream was the true form of reality' (Manlove, 1994, p85).

²¹ See also Lewis' comments on the status of Adam and Eve to their descendants in Lewis, C.S., (1975) *Preface to Paradise Lost*, Oxford University Press, pp. 116-121.

²² A trend emerges in these early twentieth century thinkers moving along similar lines of argument underlying which is the notion that the study of language could reveal cultural and historical insight into the nature of man. Moorman pointed out that Tylor, Lang and Frazer's view of primitive man behaving in accordance with reason was rejected by Cassirer and others, 'the older critics and philosophers ... among them Kant, Tylor, and Frazer, maintained that primitive man was in essence a kind of crude scientist; that he reasoned as we reason, by cause and effect, and that he thought as we think, in perceptible logical patterns' (Moorman, 1960, p8). Though Moorman does not mention him it should also be affirmed that Barfield was one of those who rejected this hypothesis (see Barfield, 1988, *Saving the Appearances*, Wesleyan University Press, p29). An element of overlap also occurs in Cassirer and Barfield's treatment of myth and language, both rejecting Max Müller's approach. For Cassirer even language works as a veil of concealment.

²³ The notion of an all seeing God above or beyond time and able to see all times yet leaving a sense of human freedom of choice is a problem to which Boethius proposed a solution in *The Consolation of Philosophy* (c. early 6th century A.D.), by suggesting that God is located in a point of simplicity, seeing only windows of man's sequential time whilst chains of fate extend as sequential time

moves further from God's central point, (see Lewis, 1995, p75-91). For Boethius, the nearer to God's simplicity the greater the freedom of choice available to man.

- ²⁴ Ransom's transcending of his ordinary senses in order to 'see' or appreciate the Great Dance takes place 'by a transition which he did not notice, it seemed that what had begun as speech was turned into sight, or into something that can be remembered only as if it were seeing' (Lewis, 1989, p344). It is also useful to bear in mind that the eldila manipulate brains.
- ²⁵ First published as *Sprache und Mythos, Ein Beitrag zum Problem der Gotternamen* in 1925.
- ²⁶ The Green Lady explains that whilst 'Among times there is a time that turns a corner and everything this side of it is new. Times do not go backward' (Lewis, 1989, p198), she views Earth as 'chosen for time's corner' (Lewis, 1989, p203) leaving little hope for spiritual progression.
- ²⁷ Cassirer drew upon the work of Dixon, Codrington, Gabelentz and Schmidt, amongst others, concerning language development for the Maidu, Melanesian, Polynesian, Indonesian and Tibetan peoples (see *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, 1955, Vol. 1, *Language*, Yale, p242).
- ²⁸ This paraphrases Schultz' comments on the truth at the heart of a tribe's totemic symbol of cultural organisation (see Schultz, 2000, p70), which in the case cited is a totem pole. This totem is fundamental to the primitive's worldview. Whilst worldviews may change, the notion of a performative truth remains relevant even for modern civilisation. Paul de Man coined the 'term "performative" when applied to the meaning of a literary text' (see Schultz, 2000, p82), see Paul de Man (1971) *Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism*, 2nd Ed., University of Minnesota Press.
- ²⁹ Cassirer, 1985, Vol. 3, p69.

The Green Lady's emergence from complete submergence in myth recalls, for me, Cassirer's dialectic of the mythical consciousness in which he postulates that 'as the mythical consciousness advances' (Cassirer, 1955, p236) there comes a point at which man can look back upon the image world in which myth is manifested, a sense of recognition and transcendence then occurs. The Green Lady achieves this through being exposed to the images generated by the Unman and through being shown good and evil, thus achieving a purer religious consciousness through her new knowledge.

The Symbolic Form of Myth in *Till We Have Faces*

This chapter of my thesis will provide a reading of *Till We Have Faces* from a Cassirean perspective. Cassirer's phenomenological traits and characteristics of myth provide a key to understanding *Till We Have Faces*. This work, wrought from Lewis' life-time contemplation of myth, deals with adult themes and is a work that penetrates to the heart of mythical thought, as Lewis constructs a society that has a mythical world-view. Identifying the symbolic form of myth within Lewis' novel helps reveal the work's fundamental mythical operations. Myth has a particular prominence and importance in this work, permeating, affecting, and even structuring the novel, and so it is advantageous to explore its specific operations through Cassirer's myth phenomenology. Cassirer identified myth as a symbolic form, each symbolic form having a 'unique formative power' (Schultz, 2000, p53). The form of myth can thus order experience. The symbolic form of myth is different from other symbolic forms because myth appears to have provided 'the first type of forming of the world by means of symbols' (Schultz, 2000, p53). Cassirer maintained that symbols become 'constitutive of experience' (Schultz, 2000, p52). He recognised the way that myth has its own distinctive symbolism that can include physical objects, and also that myth has its own inner form or peculiar kind of 'logic'. Its symbols have a dialectic, which means that they ultimately change into a different kind. Through exploring the symbolic form of myth in *Till We Have Faces* we can identify myth's characteristics, traits and symbols and delineate the consciousness or state beyond the sequential story structure.

For Lewis' creation of *Till We Have Faces*, subtitled *A Myth Retold*, he drew upon the pattern of the myth of Cupid and Psyche as told by the Roman poet Lucius Apuleius Platonicus (born in 125A.D.) in books IV to VI of his *Metamorphoses*. From Apuleius' tale Lewis took the core elements of the myth, including Psyche's beauty rivalling that of the goddess Venus. Venus' anger causes her to send her son, Cupid, to make Psyche fall in love with the basest, ugliest, 'most miserable creature living' (Apuleius, 1996, p65) whilst the Oracle of Apollo tells her father to sacrifice Psyche to

a dragon. However, Cupid falls in love with Psyche and has a god of the wind rescue her. Psyche becomes Cupid's wife but her sisters are jealous of her new good fortune and advise her to light a lamp in order to see the god who only visits her in darkness. For her act of disobedience to the god Psyche is cast out to wander the desert. She falls under Venus' power and is set four tasks that appear impossible but manages to accomplish three of them through supernatural help. However, she fails in the last task and has to be rescued from Hades by Cupid. Cupid then pleads her cause to Zeus who decides to make her a goddess. These are the elements of the myth.

Lewis made the supposition that Apuleius was the tale's 'transmitter, not its inventor' (Lewis, 1978b, p8) and, further, felt that Apuleius' telling of this myth was incorrect. In Apuleius' version Cupid's palace is visible to Psyche's sisters and, because of this, 'the poison of envy that they bare against Psyche grew hot within them' (Apuleius, 1996, p72). Their envy of their sister's good fortune is the motive that spurs them to set about disrupting things by encouraging Psyche to defy her husband's wishes and light the lamp even though Cupid had forbidden her to see him. In Lewis' rendering of the myth, he makes 'Psyche's palace invisible to normal, mortal eyes' (Lewis, 1978b, p7), a change that he considered had 'forced itself upon me, almost at my first reading of the story, as the way the thing must have been' (Lewis, 1978b, p8). Lewis wanted this change because it 'brings with it a more ambivalent motive and a different character for my heroine and finally modifies the whole quality of the tale' (Lewis, 1978b, p8). However, Lewis includes a moment when Psyche's sister, Orual, glimpses the palace and has to then question if she can believe what she has so briefly seen. Lewis therefore was projecting his imagination towards a pattern of the myth that he considered to be prior to its telling by Apuleius. He said that he 'felt quite free to go behind Apuleius' (Lewis, 1978b, p8) and this sense of 'going behind' the Roman writer restores a mythical quality that Lewis believed had been eroded through Apuleius' more allegorical interpretation. Lewis set his tale in a fictional minor Greek province called Glome sometime before the birth of Christ. This was a time, according to Lewis, when the old pagan gods were entering into a mythological twilight as the Greeks sought to allegorise their myths (see Lewis, 1958, p87, and Chapter Two). Since he saw the myth as being prior to Apuleius' version this tale is probably one of those pre-Christian myths in which, according to Lewis, God was planting divine hints or premonitions about the central truth of Christian faith that would be realised with the Incarnation.

Lewis' restoration of the invisibility of Psyche's palace was only one of many changes that affect the myth in his retelling. He also brought in other mythical elements. Peter Macky points out that 'Within the story there are segments that can be called myths too' (Macky, 1986, p77). Perhaps most significantly, as Peter Schakel observes, as the reader progresses through Lewis' retelling 'seasonal archetypes Lewis planted earlier in the chapter (chapter 21) reappear and transform Apuleius's pleasant tale into a pagan fertility myth' (Schakel, 1984, p63). Similarly fertility themes also emerge in Lewis' treatment of Venus. Lewis thus enhances, and attempts to return to, what he considered as 'original' myth. The fertility myth most notably emerges when the priest of Essur relates the myth of Talapal and Ialim (the Essurian Ungit and her son). In this version jealousy is described as the motivation behind the action of the lighting of the lamp. The Essurians have a temple in which a statue of Istra (Psyche) is kept. The Essurian myth is related to a pagan fertility cult since Istra is, for them, a goddess all through spring and summer who 'flies away' (Lewis, 1978b, p255) when the priest enters the temple with a lamp and veils her at the onset of winter.¹ Thus a dying and reviving goddess theme emerges that prefigures the dying and reviving of Christ who undertook His sacrifice to ensure not a new harvest of corn but the harvest of the souls of mankind (see Matthew 9:37-38 and 13:24-30). In 'Myth Became Fact' (1944) Lewis explains his theory that 'We pass from a Balder or an Osiris, dying nobody knows when or where, to a historical Person crucified (it is all in order) *under Pontius Pilate*' (Lewis, 1944a, p44, Lewis' italics).

It is worth briefly reminding ourselves of the intentions of Apuleius. Whilst the Romans generally exhibited a sense of syncretism² in their treatment of the gods, Apuleius drew many deities under the hierarchical superiority of the goddess Isis in Book 11 of his *Metamorphoses*.³ Whilst Isis was central to Apuleius, who became an Isiac priest, Lewis was a Christian apologist and Christian themes emerge in his fictions. Apuleius related the myth of Cupid and Psyche within a collection of tales that loosely follow the adventures of his hero, Lucius, who has been transformed into an ass. Hence Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* are also known as *The Golden Ass*, or 'the best of the ass stories' (Moorwood, 1996, pvii). In Egyptian Isis' mythology the ass represented Set (Seth) or evil, and it was Seth who murdered Isis' husband, the god Osiris. In *The Golden Ass* Apuleius has the character Lucius find ultimate salvation and the restoration of his humanity by the power of the goddess Isis (see book 11).

Till We Have Faces is, fundamentally, about the relation of Lewis' protagonist with the gods. In Lewis' novel the protagonist is not Psyche but her sister Orual. Orual, who is one of the daughters of King Trom of Glome, suffers many trials and her life can be thought of as a journey that culminates in a new spirituality and knowledge of self. She is the medium through which the reader experiences Lewis' interpretation of the Cupid and Psyche myth and also what it is like to live in a pre-Christian, polytheistic, mythically orientated society. Lewis' novel is divided into two parts, both narrated by Orual. Her younger half-sister Psyche thus has less prominence and attention than in Apuleius' version. The first section of the novel ends with Orual's denunciation of the gods. She demands that her readers 'judge between the gods and me' (Lewis, 1978b, p258). Her complaint against them is that they gave her Psyche to love and then took her away. It is curious that she doesn't include in her complaint that she was born with a facial disfigurement that has marred her life. Presumably, if she had been born beautiful, she might have developed in a less fixated way. At the heart of the novel there is the ongoing theme of truth and appearance and how people react to these often quite disparate phenomena. Lewis said that he wanted to explore several themes, 'the straight tale of barbarism, the mind of an ugly woman, dark idolatry and pale enlightenment at war with each other and with vision, and the havoc which a vocation, or even a faith, works on human life' (Lewis, 1978b, p8). All of these themes are explored within a novel that not only retells the Cupid and Psyche myth, but also seeks to explain the formation of such a myth. Lewis uses the technique of 'historical realism' (Myers, 1994, p191) to promote the sense that we are reading a genuine personal account of Orual's life. The story is presented as an 'autobiographical' narrative and this introduces a sense of reportage. This sense of reporting the facts reflects Lewis' attack on the views of various Biblical critics of his time who denied the historical authenticity of the Gospel accounts of miraculous events. Rudolf Bultmann proposed that the Gospel accounts should be demythologised but Lewis maintained that the story of Christ should neither be viewed wholly literally nor wholly symbolically, but that rather critics should acknowledge both aspects since Christ's story should impart, paradoxically, both myth and fact, or the fact that this myth occurred.⁴ Despite Orual's pains to write a genuine history she learns at the climax of part one that 'her history has become a myth' (Myers, 1994, p209).

The Glomians live in a small, parochial kingdom, their existence bounded by the immediacy of their need for food and protection. They have limited imaginations and there is a dearth of learning in their culture. All these factors contribute to the perpetuation of their mythical world-view. However, they should not necessarily be thought of as regressive but simply as an example drawn from the history of the development of human consciousness. Glome is a society living in thrall to pagan religion and life there is dominated at every turn by mythical thought. Glome's tribal society and dominant mode of mythical thought contrasts with modern-day societies that are generally founded upon reason. A wholly different mode of consciousness is thus evoked in, and by, *Till We Have Faces*. We are not simply following the pattern of an ancient myth but learning about a mythical mentality. The world-view of the people is initially deeply mythical but, as Orual gains authority and power over the people, she is able to bring in reforms based upon the advice of her mentor the Fox (so called because of his red hair and fox-like cunning). The Fox is a captured Greek who is the King's slave and becomes a surrogate father figure to the royal sisters Orual and Psyche, although he doesn't form such a close bond with the other sister Redival. He is a philosopher who secretly loves poetry (see Lewis, 1978b, pp. 16-17) and who is ordered to teach the royal sisters. His teaching soon extends to imparting ideas that are emerging from the 'new' Greek Enlightenment. Even with the Fox's help Orual has difficulty bringing her people out of their mythical mentalities. Fundamentally, what we are confronted by in Glome is what Cassirer identified, through the study of the symbolic form of myth, as the 'principle of mythical causality' (Cassirer, 1955, p45). This principle comes into operation through the Glomians' attempts to provide mythical explanations of their world. It operates on several levels throughout *Till We Have Faces* and critics ignoring this fundamental principle are likely to misread the novel. The mythical causality in operation throughout the novel is an early intimation that in Glome myth is a living power.

In contrast to mythical causality the usual view of causality involves logical, empirical reasoning from cause to effect. Following this view, appearance becomes subordinated to the truth of general laws. This more scientific approach leads us to what Cassirer would term the 'purely theoretical world view' (Cassirer, 1955, p43). In contrast to ordinary causality 'mythical causation', as propounded by Cassirer, leads to the mythical world-view and the whole gamut of traits and characteristics involved in

specifically mythical thought. In mythical causality ‘every simultaneity, every spatial coexistence and contact, provide a real causal “sequence” The principles of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* and *juxta hoc, ergo propter hoc* are characteristic of mythical thinking’ (Cassirer, 1955, p45). On its simplest level this can be observed in the vast networks of mythical relations in *Till We Have Faces*. For example, when Orual’s new step-mother is to give birth to Psyche a great fire is made in the hall of the palace, ‘the Priest of Ungit walked round it nine times and threw in the proper things’ (Lewis, 1978b, p22). In a purely theoretical world-view, this action can have no logical effect upon the forthcoming birth. However this is merely the ‘tip of the ice-berg’ when considering the permeation of mythical thought throughout Glome. It is, in fact, the reality that the Glomians live with. Various ‘barbarian religious intuitions’ are listed by Van Der Weele,

It is the Fox (a character espousing Greek enlightenment) who tries to demolish the logic which links the touch of a hand to the healing of disease, drought to a lack of male sons, rain and fertility to the sacrifice of the Accursed, the proper selection of wood used for the royal bed to male heirs (Van Der Weele, 1977, p187).

Readers of the previous chapters of this study will recall Cassirer’s view of myth’s peculiar ‘logic’ or inner form which is precisely applicable to the kind of relational system Van Der Weele describes. Thus these intuitions are more properly identified as examples of mythical thought. It is mythical causality that lies at the heart of such actions as the King’s sacrifice of his cattle, rams and goats in order to propitiate Ungit, Orual’s fear of the Fox’s talk of Ungit as a bad omen (see Lewis, 1978b, p32), keeping the palace doors open during the birth of Psyche because ‘the shutting of a door might shut up the mother’s womb’ (Lewis, 1978b, p22), and the old woman who gets Psyche to kiss her baby because she believes that through this action Psyche’s divine beauty will be imparted (see Lewis, 1978b, p35). In Cassirer’s myth phenomenology,

Mythical thinking does not know that relation which we call a relation of logical subsumption, the relation of an individual to its species or genus, but always forms a material relation of action and thus - since in mythical thinking only “like” can act on “like” - a relation of material equivalence (Cassirer, 1955, p65).

This ‘material relation of action’ means that when something detrimental happens, mythical causes are imputed and an action of propitiation has to be effected. For

example, when the poor harvests result in starvation, sickness and pestilence (see Lewis, 1978b, pp. 37-40) the people become a fear driven mob besieging the gates of Glome's palace.⁵ They demand food from the King's granaries and healing from his daughter, 'the princess with her healing hands' (Lewis, 1978b, p39). They identify Psyche as 'a goddess' (Lewis, 1978b, p40) and some think her beauty terrifying and call out that she is Ungit. However, although some survive the fever the situation worsens. The river Shennit dries, wild animals kill the sheep and neighbouring tribes threaten war, making unreasonable demands. For all these reasons, and because the King has a 'barrenness of sons which is hateful to Ungit' (Lewis, 1978b, p53), the priest of Ungit believes his goddess to be angry. Ungit is the goddess of the Glomians and this is not the first such occasion that her anger has been roused. On each previous occasion when Ungit turned upon her people equally terrible things happened until the priest determined who was the Accursed and expiated their sin.

All this might be dismissed by those who would suppose that there's nothing really more at work in Glome than belief. Lewis, however, was aware that similar belief, or faith, is the central reality of Christian religion. Faith is the fundamental bedrock of Christ's teaching.⁶ Thus the Glomians' faith in mythical powers makes those powers their reality. It is, in its way, a subjection to what Cassirer would term 'the fear of demons ... (in which man's) self, his innermost being, is dominated by a dark mythical power' (Cassirer, 1955, p172).

The priest recalls previous occasions of Ungit's anger, such as when the Shennit flooded and the priest put the blame onto a woman who had cursed Ungit's son, the god of the mountain. He explains that the 'Shennit returned to her banks' (Lewis, 1978b, p54) only after he had recognised the woman as the Accursed and expiated her sin against Ungit.⁷ Now, during the time of the plague, it is the priest's view that 'there will be no mending of all our ills till the land is purged' (Lewis, 1978b, p54). Cassirer commentator William Schultz notes that in a mythically orientated society 'if a person does something wrong, the whole community is equally to blame as if it shared a kind of evil contagion' (Schultz, 2000, p59). The priest identifies Psyche as the Accursed because she is a mortal 'aping the gods and stealing the worship due to the gods' (Lewis, 1978b, p55). For these acts she must die by 'the Great Offering' (Lewis, 1978b, p54). Had he read Lewis' novel Cassirer would undoubtedly have identified the priest's recommendation as a demand for a rite 'of purification and atonement' (Cassirer, 1955,

p56). Through putting the blame for the tribe's ills onto Psyche we can see that the 'taint ... (or) miasma' (Cassirer, 1955, p56) of a community 'can be transferred to an individual' (Cassirer, 1955, p56). Psyche becomes the focus of the 'taint' and her destruction will destroy it. She is thus to be sacrificed to 'the Brute' (Lewis, 1978b, p55).

The Brute is a creature that is 'very black and big, a terrible shape' (Lewis, 1978b, p55). Questioning the priest from the perspective of Enlightened Reason the Fox learns that this terrible shadow being was seen by a shepherd who woke startled in the night and drove off a lion from his flock with a burning torch. The Fox thus argues that the lion threw up a great shadow but his argument is dismissed as 'the wisdom of the Greeks' (Lewis, 1978b, p56). For the priest, even if the Brute is a shadow, it will not stop this darkness of Ungit's anger from descending from the mountain and killing the Glomians because 'the Brute is, in a mystery, Ungit herself or Ungit's son, the god of the Mountain; or both' (Lewis, 1978b, p56). The comments of the priest of Ungit reveal a sense of merging or metamorphosis involved in the manifestations of his goddess. This classic example of mythical thinking involves an attitude-laden object, the feared shadow which is the wrath of Ungit.⁸ The shepherd's emotive reaction to the shadow suggests what Cassirer would term a 'hypostatization' or 'projection of the immediately experienced situation into one point' (Schultz, 2000, p72). The resultant object of his thought suggests a supernatural demon rather than merely a trick of the light. For the startled shepherd woken in the night things were difficult to distinguish and he felt fear. The shadow, or 'object', was thus characterised as full of menace. When the priest of Ungit learns of the shepherd's tale he supplies an intuitive relational sense of mythical causality to the problem. The shadow is the focus of the people's irrational fears. Whilst through the philosophy of Cassirer we can recognise it as a mythical symbol, for the people it is a genuine manifestation of their goddess's anger. It is characteristic of mythical thought that the shadow can have 'the same role' (Cassirer, 1955, p42) as an image, being to all intents the same. The shadow is thus a real part of Ungit according to the form of mythical thought (see Cassirer, 1955, p51).

Something profound concerning the mythical nature of the gods is also revealed during this debate concerning the Shadowbrute. Whilst the Fox looks for specific causes and effects, in contrast, in mythical thinking, 'Anything can *come from* anything ... mythical thinking knows only a simple metamorphosis (taken in the Ovidian, not in the

Goethian sense)' (Cassirer, 1955, p46). In the example of a god, one can also be many through the relational inner form of myth. Thus Ungit can be the ugly stone in her temple mound, or manifest herself as the Shadowbrute. Even if the Brute is Ungit's son he can be considered to have essentially merged with her when acting for her. The action makes him into her and the priest declares that 'I know that they (the gods) dazzle our eyes and flow in and out of one another like eddies on a river' (Lewis, 1978b, p58). This simile is well drawn because in its definition of the nature of the gods, the substratum remains the river whilst the gods are the sub-movements upon the greater flow. The gods are aspects or particular manifestations of divinity. They can manifest themselves through specific peculiarities of nature, forces or events. On a more literary level, since Lewis' source is the Apuleian myth of Cupid and Psyche's romance, in *Till We Have Faces* the god of the mountain is Psyche's lover whilst in Apuleius' version Psyche's lover is Cupid. Thus, accepting that Lewis avoids easy identification, the source for the god of the mountain is Cupid.⁹ In Apuleius' telling Cupid's mother is Venus; in Lewis' version the god of the mountain is Ungit's son. Following this reasoning, the source for Ungit is Venus. However, we know that Apuleius makes Venus one of the manifestations of Isis in the eleventh book of *The Golden Ass*,¹⁰ thus the echo of Isis' mythology emerging in Ungit becomes more comprehensible. By peeling away the Romanisation Lewis re-invests the mythical goddess with a more ancient power. In Egyptian myth Isis was believed to control the Nile's flooding¹¹ and therefore fecundity and growth; in Lewis' novel Ungit has the same powers of control over the river Shennit. There are thus elements of ancient pagan deity, or what Lewis called 'dark idolatry', involved in his reworking. Even so he doesn't make Ungit or her son clearly identifiable because, as the priest tells us, 'nothing that is said clearly can be said truly about them (the gods)' (Lewis, 1978b, p58). The priest of Ungit proclaims that holy wisdom is not clear 'as if the gods were no more than letters written in a book' (Lewis, 1978b, p58) but instead holy wisdom is 'thick and dark like blood' (Lewis, 1978b, p58). The priest asserts that only his wisdom of sacrifice brings rain and grows corn and puts into a man something that makes him know how to live and how to die (Lewis, 1978b, p58).

The priest's world-view presents a strictly sacred or profane opposition for its reality. Cassirer proposed that in mythical consciousness 'All reality and all events are

projected into the fundamental opposition of the sacred and profane' (Cassirer, 1955, p75). We can see this opposition at work in the soldier Bardia's attitudes

I wouldn't eat with my left hand, or lie with my wife when the moon's full, or slit open a pigeon to clean it with an iron knife, or do anything else that's unchancy and profane, even if the King himself were to bid me (Lewis, 1978b, p144).

Even ordinary things acquire this 'mythical "illumination"' (Cassirer, 1955, p75) which is projected into the very structure of Lewis' novel and particularly into the organisation of the world of the Glomians. Glome is divided by the river Shennit. On one side lies Ungit's temple and the lands used to grow sacrificial animals, this is thus the sacred side. The opposite side is profane, having all the secular aspects of Glome's kingdom such as housing and Trom's palace (see Lewis, 1978b, p12). There is also a sense of directional sacral significance in the mountain lying easterly and beyond which is the god's valley where the god's palace is 'man's intuition of Heaven' (Manlove, 1987, p198). The heights of the mountain leading up to the valley and palace of Psyche's husband, the god of the mountain, are a truly sacral zone to the sacrificed and divinely rescued Psyche. The soldier Bardia calls this area 'the bad part of the mountain; I mean, the holy part. Beyond the tree it's all gods' country' (Lewis, 1978b, p108), and his attitude suggests what Cassirer would term a 'mythical-religious imprint' (Cassirer, 1955, p98) that demarcates space with a mythical accent. This sense of zoning is an example of 'the mythical feeling of space' (Cassirer, 1955, p96). For Psyche the environment of her palace is a sacral reality, she sees wine where Orual tastes only water, for example. When Orual drinks from 'a river flowing in the god's secret valley' (Lewis, 1978b, p141) her senses become attuned to the other world of the gods. Her comprehension brings no peace to Orual, instead she has only horror at the 'sickening discord, a rasping together of two worlds, like two bits of a broken bone' (Lewis, 1978b, p129). Whilst Orual has a wilful disbelief, refusing to allow herself to believe, Psyche has an uncompromising faith in her heavenly reality.

Faith is thus the fundamental bedrock of Psyche's sacral world-view. Arguably, if Orual could make a similar intuitive leap of faith, she would also have a sustained vision of Psyche's palace. Remarkable faith is also displayed by the old priest of Ungit who maintains his belief in Ungit even though, at one point, Trom threatens to kill him by pressing his dagger between the priest's ribs. Faith grounds both Psyche and the

priest's subtly different world-views, helping them to order their environment. From the extreme example of the post-sacrifice Psyche, convinced that she is in heaven, we can see that the old priest is firmly embedded in myth. The priest's mythical world-view reminds us that 'The most distinctive trait of a symbolic form is the way it orders experience' (Schultz, 2000, p52). Thus the traits of the priest's thought form a woven unity, or what Cassirer would call 'a self-enclosed realm' (Cassirer, 1955, p74). To go beyond, to cross into the sacred country of the gods is shunned by Bardia, and even the priests fear to tread outside the mythical confines of their world (see Lewis, 1978b, p108 & p111). The physical symbol of this mythical boundary is the sacrificial Tree to which Psyche is taken and fastened with 'the iron girdle' (Lewis, 1978b, p121). Psyche is a Christ-like figure, embodying innocence and purity yet sacrificed for the benefit of all. Lewis has her explain to Orual that her experience was mixed up with thoughts of the divine and the philosophy of both the Fox and the priest of Ungit (see Lewis, 1978b, p119). Psyche explains that her experience was 'about the blood and the earth and how sacrifice makes crops grow. I'm not explaining it well. It seemed to come from somewhere deep inside me' (Lewis, 1978b, p119). When the moment of dying comes the rain and winds arrive and a change occurs in Psyche, 'I knew quite well that the gods really are, and that I was bringing the rain' (Lewis, 1978b, p119). It is then that the god of the west wind appears to her and 'pulled me right out of the iron girdle' (Lewis, 1978b, p121). Lewis' description is surely the tearing of Psyche's soul from her body.

There are many mythological antecedents that suggest themselves as sources for the dying and reviving that Lewis portrays in the series of events that build up to the sacrifice of Psyche. Firstly, she has an unnatural beauty that is equated with divinity and is thus proclaimed a goddess. Secondly, she is called upon to heal the people because they believe that her powers will help them if they are touched by divinity. However, when things turn against the people and events conspire to cause drought, suffering, plague and the threat of war, then the people denounce Psyche as a false goddess. Even worse, they believe that the wrath of the 'genuine' goddess has now been brought down upon them in the form of the supernatural Shadowbrute. Recognised as having divinity about her, as though she had been 'touched' by the gods, Psyche is set apart from ordinary people and forced to make the ultimate sacrifice to ensure the people's well-being. James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* contains many similar myths of sacrifice for the greater good, usually in order to ensure new harvests.¹² The sacrificial god's dying is

associated with autumn and winter whilst the god's reviving is usually associated with spring and summer. Thus a cyclic sense emerges. Cassirer maintained that the image of the dying and resurrected god run(s) through most of the historical religions; it recurs in many variants, yet essentially the same, in the religious experience of the primitive peoples. And everywhere a great religious force flows from it (Cassirer, 1955, p188).

For Lewis the myth of Psyche's sacrifice is an echo, a reverberation back in time from Christ's sacrifice at the Crucifixion.¹³ As Christ was left to die on the cross, Psyche is bound to the holy tree on the mountain. She becomes 'the Great Offering' (Lewis, 1978b, p56)¹⁴ that will assuage Ungit's anger and 'the victim must be perfect' (Lewis, 1978b, p56).¹⁵

Ungit, as the goddess of Glome, and a focus of mythical power, is the central image of the Glomians' world. Her physical image is an apparently shapeless stone situated in the heart of an earth mound that is her temple or 'house'. The mound is fashioned around the stone, and is a hump that is

most like a huge slug lying on the field. This is a holy shape, and the priests say it resembles, or (in a mystery) that it really is, the egg from which the whole world was hatched or the womb in which the whole world once lay (Lewis, 1978b, p102).

Lewis' critic Doris Myers identifies that the egg-shape of Ungit's house is 'a symbol of fertility' (Myers, 1994, p197). However, from Cassirer we can gain an even more fundamental insight since he discussed a similar creation myth involving an egg that in Egyptian myth 'first issues from Nun, the primordial water' (Cassirer, 1955, p209). The egg of this myth, Cassirer proposed, demonstrates that

in order to take determinate form the mythical idea of creation must cling to some concrete substratum, but that, on the other hand, it seeks more and more to negate this substratum, to tear itself away from it (Cassirer, 1955, p209).

Thus there is a tension within such creation myths, this tension being observed by Lewis in his comments on various pagan creation myths in *Reflections on the Psalms* (1961). With the exception of Plato's creation theology which for Lewis is 'a clear Theology of Creation in the Judaic and Christian sense ... (and thus) is not ordinary Pagan religion' (Lewis, 1977f, p69), Lewis maintained that in the more usual pagan creation myths 'Things "come up out of" something or "are formed in" something ... (thus) when the

curtain rises in these myths there are always some “properties” already on the stage and some sort of drama is proceeding’ (Lewis, 1977f, p68). In contrast, Christian creation theology attempts to answer the question of where even the basic ingredients originate, how the very conditions of the universe such as time and space were made by God (see Lewis, 1977f, pp.68-69). This is because God, for Lewis, is the God of nature.

For the Glomians, occasionally, in a bad year, human sacrifices are made to their stone deity. Ungit thus retains qualities of ancient pagan worship and patterns of power that are derived from very ancient human awakenings of myth and religion. However the power of Ungit lies, fundamentally, though realising that she is a force inhabiting the mythical plane. A sense of metamorphic change within something ultimately unified (see Cassirer, 1955, pp. 62-63) emerges because of the way the gods are considered to flow in and out of each other, man, and nature, and because ‘mythical thinking causes those things which are related to one another, which are united as though by a magical bond, to merge into *one* undifferentiated form’ (Cassirer, 1955, p181).

In contrast to her ugly stone image, late in the novel a more aesthetically pleasing ‘woman-shaped image’ (Lewis, 1978b, p280) is brought into Ungit’s temple. However, according to a peasant woman of Glome questioned by Orual, this statue fails to provide a real replacement for the ‘sacred stone which is Ungit herself’ (Lewis, 1978b, p280). This is because ‘the Greek Ungit ... wouldn’t understand my speech. She’s only for nobles and learned men. There’s no comfort in her’ (Lewis, 1978b, 283). The statue is an attempt both to anthropomorphise and to allegorise Ungit.¹⁶ Clues are scattered throughout the novel as to Lewis’ intentions when creating the figure of the goddess Ungit. Early upon his arrival in the court of Trom the Fox had been interested in learning about Ungit, thinking that she is ‘Aphrodite, though more like the Babylonian than the Greek’ (Lewis, 1978b, p16). For Myers, the Fox’s early identification suggests that ‘Ungit is Aphrodite with many of the characteristics of the Babylonian Ishtar, called Balath or Astart by the Phoenicians, Artemis at Perga in Pamphylia, and Derceto at Ascalon’ (Myers, 1994, p196). In a Greek myth of Aphrodite that the Fox relates to the young Orual, Aphrodite descends to Mount Ida and falls in love with a mortal called Prince Anchises. In order to beguile him and lay with him, ‘she dimmed her glory and made herself like a mortal woman’ (Lewis, 1978b, p16). In the morning he woke and recognised her immortal glory and ‘covered his eyes and shrieked, “Kill me at once.”’ (Lewis, 1978b, p16). To the young Orual this myth that the

Fox condemns as ‘lies of poets’ (Lewis, 1978b, p16) simultaneously demonstrates both the goddess’s beauty and how terrible she is. From this myth within the myth we become aware of the sense of terror associated with a world-view in which the gods move among mortals and are both beautiful and fearful. Later Orual questions if the gods suppose that ‘we mortals will find you gods easier to bear if you’re beautiful?’ (Lewis, 1978b, p301). Beautiful or ugly, they are the bane of Orual’s existence, ‘nothing can be done but they have their bit’ (Lewis, 1978b, p226).

The Fox’s identification of Ungit as Aphrodite reminds us of the way that deities merged with others and migrated across various lands around the Mediterranean. Jane Harrison, the renowned scholar of Greek religion, observed that Aphrodite had different names and was at odds with both permanent patriarchal marriage and with patriarchal Olympus.¹⁷ However, as a bride she became ‘the Charis of physical beauty incarnate’ (Harrison, 1980, p308). This sense of profound beauty contrasts with the ugliness of Ungit’s stone. However, through mythical thought, Psyche’s special beauty evokes awe and she is identified by the Glomians as ‘Ungit herself in mortal shape’ (Lewis, 1978b, p40). Most importantly for Lewis’ novel, Aphrodite’s late arrival in Greece¹⁸ meant that she became ‘a departmental goddess, having for her sphere one human passion. The earlier forms of divinities are of larger import, they tend to be gods of all work’ (Harrison, 1980, p308). Similarly, Lewis intended Ungit to be a goddess ‘of all work’, having affinities with nature and the Shennit, and existing everywhere, even in the deadlands (see Lewis, 1978b, p291).

The setting of Lewis’ novel is significant because in this general location and period the conflict was being played out between Enlightened Greek wisdom and the old ways of ‘Holy wisdom’ (Lewis, 1978b, p58). It was thus an important time for preparing the way for Christian monotheism which took the human race from belief in many gods to faith in one.¹⁹ Thus ‘Man’s consciousness had to pass through the cleavage, the “crisis” of polytheism before it could differentiate the true God ...’ (Cassirer, 1955, p7). In *Till We Have Faces* characters are confronted by the many aspects of godhead around them and are thus brought into a relation with the Divine. Cassirer proposed that the ‘crisis’ of polytheism led to a new relationship with God and this was a ‘mythical, or ... theogonic process’ (Cassirer, 1955, p8). As the title of the novel indicates, Lewis’ book concerns attempts to emerge from a state of being without ‘faces’. At one point Orual ponders, ‘How can they (the gods) meet us face to face till

we have faces?’ (Lewis, 1978b, p305). In contrast, Ungit is recognised to have many different faces (see Lewis, 1978b, p306). Orual’s eventual emergence from her faceless state is a progression towards her attainment of ‘the utmost fullness of being which the human soul can contain’ (Lewis, 1978b, p317). Only when she stands in heaven with Psyche and encounters divinity does she receive a beauty like Psyche’s. However this is to jump ahead to the culmination of the novel.

Earlier in the novel the Fox’s recognition of Ungit as Aphrodite provides a contextualisation for this pagan goddess but his understanding of the goddess is inherently flawed because, as he admits later, he misreads the nature of religion and myth. His rationalisations do not allow him to form a truly sacral comprehension. In this sense the Fox’s reason is a limitation. During Orual’s underworld visions the Fox acknowledges the failings of Greek philosophy and rationalism to give a true appreciation of the gods. He had claimed Ungit was ‘a false image’ (Lewis, 1978b, p306) but he subsequently admits that there was also ‘the other face of Ungit (she has a thousand)’ (Lewis, 1978b, p306; Lewis’ brackets).²⁰ She is, for the shade-Fox, more like ‘the demon within’ (Lewis, 1978b, p306) than something having the sense of life he attributes to his view of the gods. Among the various aspects of Ungit now revealed she is something supernatural, ancient, a force from pre-history and a demon from inner man.²¹ Clearly only through mythical thought can she be all these things, and even at times Psyche²² or Orual.²³ It is as though people partake in aspects of Ungit and this makes them her at those points of recognition.

Ungit’s primal quality is a reminder of her nature origins. Man eventually gained knowledge and control of nature, but the secret of life begotten through love remained deeply mysterious.²⁴ Aphrodite thus retained her godhead, despite her changing aspects.²⁵ Most significantly for *Till We Have Faces*, Aphrodite had an affinity with the earth,²⁶ and with her son, Eros, the figure of Aphrodite re-emerges ‘with a new dignity as Mother rather than Maid’ (Harrison, 1980, p314). Aphrodite’s new image became ‘Venus Genetrix’ (Harrison, 1980, p314) although she retained echoes of prior godheads,²⁷ as though haunted by ‘each and every various form of the ancient Mother of Earth and Heaven (Harrison, 1980, p315).²⁸ This identification with the earth as mother, the Magna Mater, is of key significance for how we think about Ungit. Her stone image dwells underground in an earth mound temple and it is here that her followers encounter the stone manifestation of their goddess. Nearing the end of her reign as queen, Orual

describes a seasonal corn rite in which a man is supposedly reborn through his escape to the light after being confined within Ungit's darkened earth mound. Much blood soaks the deity during this rite, and

In the little clots and chains of it I made out a face; a fancy at one moment, but then, once you had seen it, not to be evaded. A face such as you might see in a loaf, swollen, brooding, infinitely female (Lewis, 1978b, p281).

Again Lewis invokes the sense of a brief impression made more by the workings of the mind than vision, as though sustained viewing requires faith in its being there. Similarly Orual's vision of Cupid's palace requires a certain self-sustaining faith. Orual explains that the image of Ungit in the temple 'had not, like most sacred stones, fallen from the sky ... at the very beginning, she had pushed her way up out of the earth' (Lewis, 1978b, p281).²⁹ Cassirer observed that primitive man marvelled at nature and considered it to be alive. When some aspect or manifestation of nature emerged that was unusual it became worshipped and elevated 'to the divine' (Cassirer, 1996, Vol. 4, p70). Thus from the chaos of nature a sense of structure emerged and the new centre of focus reinforced a sense of constancy and a sense of the recurring throughout the otherwise cacophonous sense of fluidity and change confronting man (see Cassirer, 1996, Vol. 4, pp. 68-71).

Arnom, the new high priest of Ungit, explains to Orual that Ungit 'signifies the earth, which is the womb and mother of all things' (Lewis, 1978b, p281). This is surely a direct reference to Ungit as the Magna Mater, the Earth-goddess. Interestingly, Arnom uses the word 'signifies' for we must remember that Arnom is not the old priest of Ungit. Arnom has, by the time of Orual's viewing of the rite, learnt much from the Fox and read books on philosophy that the Fox has brought into Glome at Orual's request (see Lewis, 1978b, p241). In the words of Orual, Arnom 'was learning from the Fox to talk like a philosopher about the gods' (Lewis, 1978b, p243). Arnom therefore thinks of the Ungit stone as 'signifying' the earth mother. Thus a level of abstraction has entered his thinking, but for the old priest who was Arnom's predecessor, and for the people of Glome steeped in the mythical world-view, the stone is a reality of the goddess Ungit and a manifestation of the earth mother.

In the *Metamorphoses* the mother of the gods is invoked by Lucius during his appeal to Isis in Book 11. Cassirer explains that 'In the Isis cult Isis, the creator of the green seeds, is to her worshipers the Mother of God, the Great Mother, the Queen, who

gives life to all men' (Cassirer, 1955, pp. 190-191). The importance of this identification lies in the mythical notion of the earth as Mother giving up life and growth through seeds and the fructification of the soil. For Ungit's followers, there is a mythical, though thoroughly concrete, connection between the land, gods and men, all of which partake in the mystery of generative growth. Nature is a cycle of new births that is most easily apprehended mythically. Cassirer proposed that through orgiastic dances man attempted to form a link between himself and nature, and to heighten within himself the 'life feeling' (Cassirer, 1955, p188). He wanted to restore his oneness with the primal 'source of life' (Cassirer, 1955, p189), and this is not simply a

mythical religious interpretation of the natural process but an immediate union with it, an authentic drama which the religious subject experiences in himself. The mythical narrative is for the most part merely an outward reflection of this inner process, a light veil behind which this drama is apparent (Cassirer, 1955, p189).

Dressed as a bird Ungit's priest performs 'the rite of the Year's birth' (Lewis, 1978b, p279) using a wooden sword to symbolise that he has to fight his way out of the temple. Cassirer maintained that through mythical thinking

In the festive rituals with which man accompanies certain decisive phases of the year ... it is everywhere evident that this is no mere reflection, no analogical copy of an outward event, but that human action and the cosmic process are here directly interwoven (Cassirer, 1955, pp. 189-190).

In mythical thought the same vital life-giving powers bring about 'the growth of plants and the birth and growth of man' (Cassirer, 1955, p190). When the priest of Ungit bursts from the womb of the temple the people cry "'He's born! He's born!" ...whirling their rattles, and throwing wheat-seed into the air' (Lewis, 1978b, p284). Grain is a mythical symbol that is especially representative of the power of Isis' husband, the god Osiris who was torn into many pieces, or 'threshed', by Seth (evil) in the myth of Seth and Osiris.³⁰ Cassirer noted that in many myths, such as that of Osiris, there is a sense of breaking up the divine being into the multiplicity of forms.³¹ In this way the one corn god is equally in every seed of corn (see Cassirer, 1985, Vol. 3, p68). It was through harvesting the grain that man could make bread and attain agricultural self-sufficiency. Cassirer asserted that 'Through the practice of sacramental acts representing the primordial secret of growth, death, and rebirth the initiate seeks to obtain assurance of rebirth' (Cassirer, 1955, p190). Thus the actions of the priest in the House of Ungit

support the form of thought involved in the Glomian rite. At the risk of over-complication, rites are themselves mythical symbols to Cassirer (see Schultz, 2000, p56). The Glomian rite is a mythical symbol composed of a symbolic action conducted by the priest of Ungit. Through the rite of the Year's birth the Glomian worldview is maintained. The priest of Ungit (accepting that Arnom doesn't have quite the same mythical convictions as his predecessor) literally officiates at the re-birth of a mythical reality through his action in the rite. For Cassirer, myth in many ways 'consists much more in actions than in mere images or representations' (Cassirer, 1972, p79). The priest's action can be viewed as thus bringing the Glomians' entire mythical worldview forth from the womb of Ungit's temple each year.

In Cassirer's view there is a progression discernible in ancient religions and philosophy that culminates in man's emergence from

the mythical to the ethical self. Man rises from magic to religion, from the fear of demons to the worship of gods, and this apotheosis is not so much outward as inward. Now man apprehends not only the world but above all himself, in a new spiritual form (Cassirer, 1955, p167).³²

This is the 'transformation from mythos to ethos' (Cassirer, 1955, p168) that Cassirer discerned within the phenomenology of myth and religion. Orual has a similar struggle to emerge from a condition in which she is steeped in myth to a more ethical and religious self. One factor involved in Orual's transformation is the writing of her complaint against the gods, 'The change which the writing wrought in me ... was only a beginning; only to prepare me for the gods' surgery. They used my own pen to probe my wound' (Lewis, 1978b, p263). The writing of her complaint is the documentation of her life in order to identify the many grains of truth from the chaff of falsity. Whilst in Lewis' novel corn, grain, wheat and bread are all mythical symbols suggesting mythical relations between Ungit, the gods, Orual, Psyche, the Glomians and nature, corn and bread are also religious symbols. Christ refers to the bread as his body at the last supper,³³ although Lewis rejected the notion that this meant that Christ was simply another nature god and proposed instead that Christ is the god of nature.³⁴ For Lewis all the different gods of sacrifice eventually merge into the archetype of Christ.

Through Orual's action of writing her complaint she tries to prove her case against the gods. Her complaint makes Orual engage in self-reflection and from this she gains a clearer inner understanding. This sense of inner examination goes against the

character of mythical thought which typically seizes upon emotion and attitude and does not involve self analysis. Orual thus engages in a process that is leading her out of myth. Through the phenomenology of mythical consciousness Cassirer attempted to chart the progressive differentiation of “subject” and “object,” “I” and “world,” through which consciousness issues from its stupor, its captivity in mere material existence, in sensory impression and affectivity, and becomes a spiritual consciousness (Cassirer, 1955, p13).

A key factor in the process of any emergence from myth lies in the way that the ‘processes of forming symbols are progressively made apparent in the symbols’ (Schultz, 2000, p75). Arnom’s changing views of his goddess demonstrate this because, through his learning, he comes to think of the Ungit-stone as signifying the earth and then he tries to replace it with an obviously man created symbolic statue. However it must be noted that Schultz is not talking about Christian symbols but mythical symbols, and that the emergence from the mythical world-view leads into the more purely religious world-view. This is because the formation of symbols leads, through the relational process, to the creation of other symbols and this results in ‘an ever-progressive objectification’ (Cassirer, 1953b, p36).

As Orual’s case progresses to a final judgement the gods become tutelary and heavily involved in Orual’s inner life. They can be viewed as objective but dwelling in her (see Cassirer, 1955, p168), although they can also be spatially separated from the person with whom they are associated. Thus the tutelary spirit, the demon, can be the soul of an object separate from the man or woman. In this way, ‘Any perceptual content, any object, insofar as it arouses mythical-religious interest, be it ever so fleetingly, can be raised to the level of an independent god, a demon’ (Cassirer, 1955, p169). Orual’s forming of her religious ‘self’, her greater identity, is the fundamental problem addressed by *Till We Have Faces*.³⁵ Early in the novel, Orual’s identity is affected when she forms a love for Psyche that is so intense that she becomes less like a sister and more like a possessive step-mother. She cannot bear to let Psyche go but Psyche is taken from Orual and delivered up for sacrifice and thus becomes ‘married to the god’ (Lewis, 1978b, p57). Thus, when Orual later ascends the mountain and encounters Psyche as the wife of the god, Orual feels that the gods have stolen the only person she ever loved. She wants Psyche back and, in desperation, she destroys the marriage. Orual’s sundering of Psyche’s marriage to the god results in Psyche being cast out to wander

desert regions, weeping and searching for her husband. The god of the mountain appears before Orual and proclaims that

Now Psyche goes out in exile. Now she must hunger and thirst and tread hard roads. Those against whom I cannot fight must do their will upon her. You, woman, shall know yourself and your work. You also shall be Psyche (Lewis, 1978b, p182).

These words, spoken by a mythological being to a woman whose society lives in the reality of mythical thought,³⁶ are a profound mythical identification and the beginning of her transcendent becoming. Thus Orual takes on the burden of Psyche's tasks.³⁷ Psyche's outcast wandering becomes Orual's inner desolation. On returning to Glome Orual becomes queen and increasingly finds herself trapped within a life of desolate loneliness. As she grows older she comes to realise that her selfishness as queen has exacted a terrible cost both on herself and on the people who serve her. She has used up their lives just as the lives of Ungit's servants are similarly squandered in futile servitude, 'Glome was a web; I the swollen spider, squat at its centre, gorged with men's stolen lives' (Lewis, 1978b, pp. 287-8). Those closest to Orual, like the Fox and the soldier Bardia become old men denied the pleasures of a normal home-life because of their service to the queen. This affect of Orual's actions remains a truth that is concealed from her until late in life and only fully confronted during the time of judgement that occurs in part two.

After her return from the mountain Orual decides to disguise the truth of her ugliness beneath a veil. Eventually she finds that she has worn the veil for so long that the people have invented myths about the face beneath. From the various stories invented about Orual's veil it is explained that 'The upshot of all this nonsense was that I became something very mysterious and awful' (Lewis, 1978b, p237-8). Orual's veiling is a mythical symbol. Her veil forms an image that disguises and blots out the human face and as such it acquires a certain level of mythical consciousness. A horrible transformation is at work in Orual and the veil is a symbolic part of this. The veil presents an impression and, for Cassirer, impressions of this kind are mythical and removed 'from the realm of the ordinary, the everyday and profane' (Cassirer, 1953b, p88). At first her veil presents a fairly isolated image but gradually this image becomes more related to the mythical world-view and life of Lewis' story. The veil imparts a mythical identity to Orual as, at the same time, her humanity dies back within her. She

becomes less one of the mortals suffering the whims of the gods and more one of the mythical beings affecting and causing the suffering of the mortals. Her veil causes Trom, now old and with failing health, to recognise Orual's mythical reality. Wracked by pain from the injury of a broken thigh, and also filled with enough 'strong wine to throw a sound man into a fever' (Lewis, 1978b, p194), Trom cannot bear the presence of the veiled Orual and demands that she is taken away, 'Take away that one with the veil. Don't let her torture me. I know who she is. I know' (Lewis, 1978b, p194). The Fox explains to him that this is his daughter Orual but Trom retorts 'Aye, so she tells you ... But I know better. Wasn't she using a red-hot iron on my leg all night? I know who she is' (Lewis, 1978b, p195). Through the relations of mythical thinking Trom's broken thigh and tormenting pain are part of a curse that Ungit, the goddess of fertility, visits upon him for his action of making Tarin, Redival's lover, into a eunuch whilst the king had no sons. He is also tormented by his own conscience for the relief he felt when Psyche was taken for sacrifice and he was spared. Thus the relation between Orual and Psyche, ordained by the god, means that they have a mythical bond.

We know from Lewis' comments on Spenser's *Faerie Queene* that he was aware of various goddesses associated with the veil.³⁸ In the version of the myth of Cupid and Psyche related by the priest of Essur in Chapter 21 of *Till We Have Faces*, the statue of Istra (Psyche's Glomian name), is covered with a black veil throughout the winter. The goddess Isis was also 'represented in statuary with the head veiled, a symbol of mystery' (Bulfinch, 1962, p336). The Essurian statue's veil is removed in the spring and the priest also changes his robe at that time. Whilst the Essurian ritual veils the statue of Istra Orual bears the physical burden of wearing the veil throughout most of *Till We Have Faces*. Orual describes the veiling of the two foot high image of Istra thus, 'The thing that marred it was a band or scarf of some black stuff tied round the head of the image so as to hide its face - much like my own veil, but that mine was white' (Lewis, 1978b, p250). The Essurian temple priest describes the seasonal nature of the ritual of the statue's veiling. It is veiled in black throughout the winter and unveiled throughout the times of vegetative growth. The priest explains that 'In spring, and all summer, she is a goddess' (Lewis, 1978b, p255), but in the winter the goddess leaves and 'all winter she is wandering and suffering; weeping, always weeping' (Lewis, 1978b, p256). Her wandering and weeping are significant because Psyche, for Apuleius, and Istra, for the Priest of Essur, both wander and weep during their times of suffering. As Robert Graves

notes 'Isis is an onomatopoeic Asianic word, *Ish-ish*, meaning "She who weeps", because the Moon was held to scatter dew and because Isis, the pre-Christian original of the *Mater Dolorosa*, mourned for Osiris when Set killed him' (Graves, 1961, p337). The various identifications of Psyche in Lewis' novel as the wandering, veiled and weeping one (see Lewis, 1978b, p178, p198, p234, p238, p244) suggests support for Peter Schakel's assertion that 'Lewis turns Psyche into the goddess Apuleius worshipped, into Isis, originally a goddess of fecundity identified with Demeter' (Schakel, 1984, p62).³⁹ During lonely nights in the palace of Glome Orual feels guilt for her action of sundering Psyche's marriage and it is then that she 'hears' 'a sound of weeping; a girl's weeping; the sound for which always, with or without my will, I was listening' (Lewis, 1978b, p198).⁴⁰

Part Two of *Till We Have Faces* evokes a sense of detachment by placing Orual within a realm of pure consciousness where all is symbolic and the narrative becomes more image orientated. She has visionary experiences and these begin when Orual returns to her palace from witnessing the rite of the Year's birth and there 'sank into deep thought' (Lewis, 1978b, p284). In this condition she has a visitation from her dead father and 'instantly all the long years of my queenship shrank up small like a dream' (Lewis, 1978b, p284). Dreams too are mythical symbols according to Cassirer's myth phenomenology.⁴¹ Orual's journey into the vision world is a movement into a state that is much more dream-like and she admits 'I cannot well discern dream from waking nor tell which is the truer' (Lewis, 1978b, p287). There is a holistic symbolic nature to this visionary part of Lewis' novel. Time and space are contracted when Orual enters the dream environment. Her life, recorded as a sequence of events listed on her 'complaint', is held within the vision. The complaint is read many times whilst Orual is outside the sequential 'life' that she adumbrates. These aspects contribute to the holistic power, or state, that Lewis evokes. In a sense normal sequential reality is condensed as Orual stands outside sequential time, enabling her to have a more holistic experience of her life. The narrative of her life is repeated at frightening speeds to the underworld judges, again demonstrating the shrinkage of events. Similarly this treatment of time is echoed in that of space when, whilst in her dream/vision, Orual's father orders his daughter to dig the paved floor of the palace Pillar Room beneath which Orual finds a 'dark hole, like a wide well' (Lewis, 1978b, p285). Trom grasps her and they jump down, falling into 'another Pillar Room, exactly like the one we had left, except that it was smaller

and all made (floor, walls, and pillars) of raw earth' (Lewis, 1978b, p285). Again Trom has her set about excavating 'another black hole' (Lewis, 1978b, p286) and again they descend into 'another Pillar Room; but this was of living rock' (Lewis, 1978b, p286). This room is smaller and a journey has been made both downwards into earth and deeper into Orual's consciousness or soul. However, on the mythical level Orual has also moved deeper into the Earth-Mother.⁴² Orual's visionary journey is a movement out of the sequential time of her natural life and into a period before there was time, before her birth and back into the womb of the earth mother.

Upon their arrival in this room of 'living rock' (ibid., p286) Trom takes Orual to a mirror. Instead of the expected reflection of her disfigured face, Orual sees 'the face of Ungit as I had seen it that day in her house' (Lewis, 1978b, p287) when the stone had been blood soaked. This is a complex mythical symbol since whilst Ungit's face is covered in blood it is also 'A face such as you might see in a loaf, swollen, brooding, infinitely female' (Lewis, 1978b, p281). It is thus simultaneously an image of life and death. Considering that Ungit's image is a rough stone that when covered in blood forms a face, the 'body' of Ungit is thus below the 'face', in the caverns of the earth, recalling the Earth Mother goddess. Schultz succinctly explains Cassirer's theory that

In the case of early primitive cultures, the symbols are what we would call natural phenomena and also sensations. The connection between heaven and earth, spiritual and physical could only be felt if it were felt through an object... (Schultz, 2000, p71).

Ungit is this object for the Glomians. She is the concrete connection between the Glomians, their environment, and their spiritual life. Cassirer points out that such symbols have a 'material basis or substratum' (Schultz, 2000, p57)⁴³ and this helps our understanding of Ungit. In the mythical consciousness any object can become sacred, can be given a name and evoke certain behavioural responses, and this is how the Glomians' arrived at their understanding of Ungit's rock. Most importantly, there then becomes 'a potentially unlimited number of ways in which ... (the symbol) can be related to other things' (Schultz, 2000, p57). This sense of unlimited relation is realised in the identification of the various characters with Ungit.

In the vision world Orual undergoes a sense of progression through elevations of reality, symbolised by her descent through the pillar room floor, towards a defining moment of self-realisation through the view of herself in the mirror. The reflected image

reveals an aspect of her transcendent reality. A sense of immanence is also involved, since Ungit can be viewed as having become real in Orual. She sees one of the faces never normally revealed through the usual visual observation of the mask reflected in an ordinary mirror. She recognises herself as Ungit because she has devoured people's lives like Ungit, but her transcendental problem involves the realisation that she is not merely 'like' Ungit, 'I *was* Ungit; I in her and she in me' (Lewis, 1978b, p289). She has been seized by myth and has become mythological. It is not just that she is like Ungit, but more that she has, on the level of mythical reality, merged with Ungit, a relation or bond that Cassirer would term a mythical concrescence (see Cassirer, 1955, pp. 62-64 and p111). Following the 'law of the concrescence or coincidence of the members of a relation in mythical thinking' (Cassirer, 1955, p64), the many relations between Ungit's often dissimilar elements becomes Orual's realisation of herself. She thus sees herself as not only Ungit, but the 'Batta-thing' (Lewis, 1978b, p287). Batta is Orual's childhood nurse, whom Orual discovers cheating the slaves and telling lies about them for which Orual has her hanged (see Lewis, 1978b, p239). Orual also thinks of herself as 'what the people, and the old Priest, called holy' (Lewis, 1978b, p289). She is also a horror moving among the darkness during which she 'heard a child cry; perhaps it had dreamed of me' (Lewis, 1978b, p289). This kind of mythical thinking runs away with her, 'If I were Ungit, I might be the Shadowbrute also' (Lewis, 1978b, p290).

After the initial shock of her recognition of herself as Ungit in the underworld mirror Orual attempts to deny this merging, and tries to commit suicide on her sword but is too old and weak to hold the weapon properly. To avoid detection by her people she moves among them without her veil, having 'to go bareface' (Lewis, 1978b, p289). She attempts suicide again by tying her feet together and wading into the river Shennit. In the river's waters she realises that 'I myself had made it deep' (Lewis, 1978b, p290). However she is warned against this act by 'the voice of a god' (Lewis, 1978b, p290) and she is told that she 'cannot escape Ungit by going to the deadlands, for she is there also. Die before you die. There is no chance after' (Lewis, 1978b, p291). She is then left to 'chew the strange bread they (the gods) had given me' (Lewis, 1978b, p292). Orual's identification with Ungit means that she not only has physical ugliness but also realises that 'I was as ugly in soul as she; greedy, blood-gorged' (Lewis, 1978b, p292). She struggles between religious understanding and philosophy, believing that her ill-favours are her 'destiny' (Lewis, 1978b, p293) and that she has been 'marked out from birth'

(Lewis, 1978b, p293). Orual's escape from mythos to ethos, from a mythical self to an ethical self, lies through the judgement visited upon her soul and through bearing the burden or anguish of the four tasks set for Psyche.

In Lewis' retelling of the myth of Cupid and Psyche, he tried to evoke the numinous, open and multi-layered interpretations that he considered to emerge from the real power of myth, rather than the singular meaning drawn from stories that invite only allegorical interpretation.⁴⁴ Following this sense of ambiguity, the four tasks undertaken by Psyche, and en-burdened upon Orual, suggest phases in a progression towards divinity. They become numinous cognitive episodes of self-realisation, but there is even more going on than simply breaking through into new ways of understanding. The number of tasks has an intrinsic mythical importance. Cassirer made a study of number as part of his study of myth phenomenology and realised that there is a 'mythical function of number' (Cassirer, 1955, p140). Number is more powerful than speech because it is 'pure symbolism' (Cassirer, 1972, p214). However, there is a difference between 'pure' number and number that is ingrained with mythical thought. When number is mythically imagined it evokes the kind of aura that is associated with Pythagorean mathematical mysticism.⁴⁵ Whilst number generally suggests relationships, limitations and groups, it can also take on religious significance. In the peculiar workings of mythical thought any number can have mythical qualities. One example of this emerges when the old priest of Ungit, in order to ensure a successful birth, walks around the fire 'nine times' (Lewis, 1978b, p22). More importantly, in mythical thinking within *Till We Have Faces*, number can appear as 'a medium of spiritualization' (Cassirer, 1955, p143) thus becoming 'a vehicle of religious *signification*' (Cassirer, 1955, p143). For Cassirer the various approaches to number, the ease with which it can evoke both theoretical or mythical types of thought, means that number 'becomes, like Plato's Eros, the great intermediary, by which the earthly and divine, the mortal and immortal, communicate with each other and are composed into the unity of a world order' (Cassirer, 1955, p144). There is thus, in the very number of the tasks of Psyche, the evocation of a relation between mortals and divinity as well as the undertaking of four mythical actions.

It is not surprising that there should be four tasks, since four is 'the sacred number par excellence' (Cassirer, 1955, p147). Four is used to divide up the 'cardinal points' (Cassirer, 1955, p147) and emerges through many other such examples. The key

notion according to Cassirer is that 'in every particular fourness it (mythical thinking) apprehends the universal form of the cosmic fourness' (Cassirer, 1955, p147). Since there is a heavily sign-posted seasonal pagan fertility theme throughout Lewis' retelling of the myth of Cupid and Psyche, and in nature's cycle there are generally four seasons, it is surely similarly significant that there are four tasks or phases involved in Orual and Psyche's progress toward divinity. In Apuleius' version of the myth Psyche's four tasks involve 'first ... sorting out seeds into separate heaps' (Lewis, 1978b, p7), a task that is accomplished by Orual's 'writings (which) are seen as an attempt to perform the first task, the separating of the myriad grains (here of truth) into their proper kinds and order' (Manlove, 1987, p195). These seeds can be considered as grains of truth scattered across the 'ground' of one's life-span. Seeds are the smallest stage of life and they are that from which greater growth ensues. In mythical thought the grains symbolise the green or youngest part of Psyche's life, they are the many from which her transcendent, holistic, or greater oneness will grow. When all the tasks have been completed and Psyche's transcendent reality is ultimately made apparent to Orual, Orual realises that 'all that one meant most when one spoke her name, was now wholly present, not to be gathered up from hints nor in shreds, not some of it in one moment and some in another. Goddess? I had never seen a real woman before' (Lewis, 1978b, p317).

In Apuleius' telling, Psyche's second task is to acquire golden wool from deadly sheep. Similarly, whilst deep within her dream/vision, Orual sees the 'rams of the gods' (Lewis, 1978b, p294) and realises that her sister 'Redival's ringlets were nothing to that wool' (Lewis, 1978b, p294). Orual wants to heal the ugliness of her face and believes that 'If I can steal but one golden flock off their sides, I shall have beauty' (Lewis, 1978b, p294). She is doomed to failure and the rams trample her. However, Orual does succeed in attracting them away from another figure in the vision. This figure (Psyche) then easily obtains the wool from where it had snagged upon thorns. This phase of the 'fourness' parallels a girl's flowering of beauty. Her passage to sexuality is represented by the rams which are masculine and phallic. Whilst they trample Orual, because she so completely lacks beauty that they don't even see her, the golden curls are easily collected by Psyche. Following this, Orual comments that 'Though it was spring without, in me a winter which, I thought, must be everlasting, locked up all my powers' (Lewis, 1978b, p295).

The next task of Psyche in Apuleius' version involves fetching water from the Styx. In Lewis' re-telling Orual has to brave a scorching desert in order to return with a bowl full of 'the water of death' (Lewis, 1978b, p297). This water 'rises from the river that flows in the deadlands' (Lewis, 1978b, p297), thus she has to bring death back to Ungit, a deity that is seasonally propitiated by death. Consequently she feels she is 'Ungit's slave or prisoner' (Lewis, 1978b, p297). Her task is to bring death to a fertility goddess, thereby ending a season of growth. Lewis has Orual walk 'for a hundred years' (Lewis, 1978b, p297) through the relentless heat until she craves to drink in order to find release in the supposedly cold waters from the gloomy underworld. Unable to go on, Orual stops and despairs until a divine bird arrives (the priest of Ungit wears a bird mask) and then she realises that she has been carrying not the bowl needed to fetch the water but her 'complaint against the gods' (Lewis, 1978b, p298). This phase involves the seasoning of summer stretching into the autumnal sense of 'going into death' when plants die back in aridity and the mood evoked involves despair and spiritual aridity.

The final task of Apuleius' myth requires Psyche to take the beauty of 'Proserpina' (Apuleius, 1996, p92), or as Lewis explains 'the beauty of Persephone, the Queen of the Dead' (Lewis, 1978b, p7), to Venus in a box. This task involves a perilous descent into the underworld. However, on her ascent Apuleius has Psyche succumb to temptation and open the box and immediately she falls into a deadly slumber from which she cannot wake. This phase of the 'fourness' involves the final journey that everyone makes into the underworld, the deadlands, the afterlife. Psyche is no longer anticipating the end of autumn but in this phase she dies into winter. However, hope springs eternal through the love that Cupid has for his outcast wife. Thus in Apuleius' telling Cupid, the god of love, rescues Psyche from her slumber in the deadlands and he then petitions the favour of Jupiter in whose breast 'the laws and order of the elements and planets be disposed' (Apuleius, 1996, p95). Zeus, the sky father, then allows Psyche to drink of immortality and marry Cupid, their union resulting in the birth of the baby Pleasure, a birth that does not occur in Lewis' retelling.

In Lewis' version Orual also descends or goes into the underworld. However once there she faces the veiled underworld judge and reads her complaint. Orual's complaint is that the gods have interfered in human affairs and particularly in her life by stealing Psyche from her, and putting Psyche in a 'heaven' of the gods' making. The underworld judge makes Orual realise that her complaint is also her answer. The Shade-

Fox intercedes on her behalf, making a syncretistic address to 'Minos, or Rhadamanthus, or Persephone, or by whatever name you are called' (Lewis, 1978b, p305). He claims that the 'hollow' philosophy he taught to Orual is the reason that she denied the various faces of divinity revealed to her during her life. Through Orual's complaint the gods are put in the position of being the accused whilst Orual has cast herself as the plaintiff of the case. The underworld judge acknowledges that for the gods to accuse Orual 'a greater judge and a more excellent court must try the case' (Lewis, 1978b, p307). Orual is then taken by the Fox to await more judges and she sees 'walls ... all painted with stories ... (and) mortals would have wondered at these' (Lewis, 1978b, p308). These images come alive and reveal to Orual the various tribulations of Psyche. She is first shown Psyche attempting to drown herself which Orual prevents by calling for her to stop. Then she sees Psyche sorting the seeds whilst in fetters with the help of ants yet Psyche appears to be free from despair and anguish. Next Psyche obtains the wool whilst the rams are distracted after which Psyche brings the water from the Deadlands. Finally, after the last task is shown Psyche descends into the underworld. The communication of these images within her vision experience allows Orual to 'know' both sides of the four tasks. She understands both Psyche's participation and her own since she has experienced their burden.

In Lewis' version Psyche has to bring beauty from the Queen of the Deadlands to Ungit (see Lewis, 1978b, p312), but she does not open the box. During this task Psyche is subjected to many temptations that include the Glomians who call for her to be their goddess, a ghostly Fox who tries to reason her out of believing in the Deadlands, and a version of Orual who uses emotional blackmail to try to turn her from her path. All this is viewed through the vision by the Shade-Fox and the older Orual, the Orual who is fighting her case against the gods. 'Did we really do these things to her?' (Lewis, 1978b, p315) Orual asks the Shade-Fox and he acknowledges that despite their love for Psyche 'All here's true' (Lewis, 1978b, p315). It is a telling or version of true events, and the Fox thinks that on some 'far distant day' (Lewis, 1978b, p315) there will come a time when 'mother and wife and child and friend will all be in league to keep a soul from being united with the Divine Nature' (Lewis, 1978b, p315).⁴⁶ The obstructers try to prevent Psyche's journey. Their actions were visited upon Psyche during her mortal life and are the callings, demands and cloying persuasions of people who do not realise the damnable damage they do to others' immortal souls. In Lewis' version,

Psyche succeeds in bringing the box containing beauty from the Queen of the Deadlands but thinks she is to give this to Orual since Orual and Ungit are conrescent in Psyche's thought.

To conclude 'the fourness', we know from Cassirer that 'the veneration of the number four is expressed in the worship of the form of the cross, which is attested as one of the oldest religious symbols' (Cassirer, 1955, p147). Cassirer cites the swastika as 'the earliest form of the four-pronged cross' (Cassirer, 1955, p147). However, Cassirer observed that medieval man's speculation

infuses the whole content of the Christian doctrine into the intuition of the cross ... the four ends of the Cross were identified with the four zones of Heaven, when the East, West, North, and South were equated with certain phases of the Christian story of salvation, it was a revival of certain primeval cosmic-religious motifs (Cassirer, 1955, pp. 147-148).

Edward Zogby identifies four steps or phases towards divine love which are 'God's strategy against the hard-boiled dialectician' (Zogby, 1977, p33).⁴⁷ Zogby proposed that in *Till We Have Faces* these steps 'directly parallel the four tasks which Psyche has to perform before both she and Orual can return to their divine favour' (Zogby, 1977, p33). Thus 'the fourness' can be viewed as a progress to salvation echoing Lewis' personal sense of the phases involved in his own salvatory emergence.

With the 'last task that Ungit has set her' (Lewis, 1978b, p312), the Shade-Fox explains that 'All, even Psyche, are born into the house of Ungit. And all must get free from her. Or say that Ungit in each must bear Ungit's son and die in childbed - or change' (Lewis, 1978b, 312). In other words, their souls must emerge from myth and bear Cupid, or love, in order to be 'united with the Divine Nature' (Lewis, 1978b, p315).

After the tasks, Psyche appears 'a thousand times more her very self' (Lewis, 1978b, p317) than she had been as a mortal. The meeting of Psyche and Orual in Psyche's 'house' is a preamble to their meeting of the master of the house. With much perturbation Orual learns that 'He is coming ... The god is coming into his house. The god comes to judge Orual' (Lewis, 1978b, p318). This is no longer merely Lewis' god of the grey mountain but the archetype that Psyche's husband flows into: Christ. Before him Orual becomes beautiful 'beyond all imagining' (Lewis, 1978b, p319). All Orual and Psyche's struggles have thus been 'only a preparation' (Lewis, 1978b, p318) for

this glorious meeting. It is 'four days' (Lewis, 1978b, p319) after this last vision that Orual dies, her soul needing no further visions to unite itself to the Divine Nature.

Earlier in the novel, whilst Orual was on the mountain, the god had announced to her that 'You also shall be Psyche' (Lewis, 1978b, p182). In the culminating heavenly experience 'a great voice' (Lewis, 1978b, p319) announces that 'You also are Psyche' (Lewis, 1978b, p319). Thus Orual's becoming has changed into being. Orual now observes the reflections of both Psyche and herself, seeing 'Two Psyches, the one clothed, the other naked? Yes, both Psyches, both beautiful ... beyond all imagining, yet not exactly the same' (Lewis, 1978b, p319). For Zogby 'the anagogic value of this novel lies in seeing the two women as the two halves of the soul, really the two halves of Lewis, reason and imagination in tension' (Zogby, 1977, p34). If this is the case then Lewis saw his reason (Orual) as ugly and his imagination (Psyche) as beautiful although his reason can become as beautiful as his imagination when united with the Divine Nature.

The symbolic form of myth provides structure, through mythical relations, between the various symbols, objects, and even people and events within the novel. Myth is both something that the Glomians live within and that from which some emerge. Although it can be considered to restrict people within an enclosed realm, it is part of myth's inner tension that it can also 'elevate' people beyond the 'sterile' rationalism of the Fox and so it is the fructifying soil for the growth of the purer symbolic form of religion. Mythical symbols do not stand in isolation; they form images and relations and order the experience of those having a mythical world-view. What Lewis achieves in *Till We Have Faces* is the creation of some very powerful images, and the image forms the basis for the symbolism of the mythical consciousness.⁴⁸ When we study these images as mythical symbols, we can observe that they function within a relational network. Through the impressions they make they also trigger and form new relations, thus creating other symbols. Orual works her way out of myth, obtaining a more ethical self and eventually transcends the enclosed world-view of myth, but she does it through tasks that are inherently mythical actions. The way that mythical symbols work in the novel generally follows Cassirer's process of the dialectic of myth through which a new world-view is achieved. This has to happen for Lewis because, in the Old Testament, the Prophets attack the worship of man-created, or graven, images (see Isaiah 44.10). In *Reflections on the Psalms*, for example, Lewis says of Job 31.26-

28 that 'There is here no question of turning, (even) in a time of desperate need, to devilish gods' (Lewis, 1977f, p69), to do so would be an iniquity even though there may have been 'times of ignorance God overlooked' (Acts 17.30). However, Lewis observed that the 'doctrine which empties Nature of her divinity also makes her an index, a symbol, a manifestation, of the Divine' (Lewis, 1977f, p70). In Psalms 19 and 36, for example, 'It is surely just because the natural objects are no longer taken to be themselves Divine that they can now be magnificent symbols of Divinity' (Lewis, 1977f, p70) created by God and perhaps having signs of His hand echoing in them (see Lewis, 1977f, pp. 70-71). For Cassirer the comments of the Prophet Isaiah introduce 'an alien tension' (Cassirer, 1955, p241) into mythical consciousness that corrupts and destroys it from within (see Isaiah 44.10). Thus there then occurs

a turning back to the heart of religious feeling, which now causes the image world of myth to be recognised as something merely outward and material ... in the basic Prophetic view there can be no relation between man and God other than the spiritual-ethical relation between the I and the Thou (Cassirer, 1955, p241).

Subsequently a new self-consciousness emerges that divests itself of the sense of holiness characterised in the mythical apperception of physical, empirical, sensual, mythical objects. Following this theory, it is interesting that Lewis offers his reader no image for Orual to ultimately see before her when, finally transformed, she stands side by side with Psyche. We are given only the foreboding of his arrival by awed voices about her, the air burning as though 'something had set it on fire' (Lewis, 1978b, p318), and her impression of dread and beauty and joy that pierces her with 'overpowering sweetness' (Lewis, 1978b, p318).

Footnotes

- ¹ This veiling of the statue recalls Frazer's comments on the veiling of Isis during the ritual of Osiris, see Frazer, 1996, pp. 449-454.
- ² See Marie Louise von Franz, 1992, p65. The Roman treatment of the gods had a political dimension through the incorporation of deities into the Roman litanies instead of setting one above the others. This was a ploy used to avoid religious conflict in conquered provinces. R.E. Witt talks about syncretism in relation to the goddess Isis in Witt, R.E., (1971) *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World*, Thames and Hudson, p121.
- ³ In Book 11 of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (also called *The Golden Ass*) Isis speaks to Lucius the ass in the first person claiming a profoundly encompassing multiple identity,

I am she that is the natural mother of all things ... governess of all the elements ... initial progeny of worlds ... manifested alone and in one form of all the gods and goddesses ... (known) by many names. For the Phrygians ... the Mother of the gods at Pessinus; the Athenians ... Cecropian Minerva; the Cyprians ... Paphian Venus; the Cretans ... Dictynnian Diana; the Sicilians ... infernal Proserpine; the Eleusians their ancient goddess Ceres; some Juno, other Bellona, other Hecate, other Rhamnusia, ... (whilst) the Ethiopians ... and the Egyptians ... call me by my true name, Queen Isis (Apuleius, Bk11, trans. Adlington, 1996, p187).

Isis takes the crowning position in this catalogue of deities. Whilst she appears to have migrated to different peoples, she does not claim their goddesses to be more than mere aspects of her true identity. For Franz Cumont and Judith Krabbe, Apuleius' work illustrates 'the replacement of Greco-Roman polytheism by an eastern mystery religion' (Krabbe, 1989, p5). See also Cumont, F., (1911) *The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism*, Chicago, p83.

- ⁴ See Lewis, 1998b, pp. 86-105. See also Lewis' writings 'Myth Became Fact' (1944), 'Modern Theology and Biblical Criticism' (1959), and *Miracles* (1947). See also Duriez, 2000, p135. In 'Modern Theology and Biblical Criticism' (1959) Lewis expressed his concern about 'theology which denies the historicity of nearly everything in the Gospels to which Christian life and affections and thought have been fastened for nearly two millennia - which either denies the miraculous altogether or, more strangely, after swallowing the camel of the Resurrection strains at such gnats as the feeding of the multitudes' (Lewis, 1998b, p87). One school of Biblical criticism proposed that the fourth Gospel is 'a "spiritual romance", "a poem not a history"' (Lewis, 1998b, p89) and to be compared with, amongst others, '*Pilgrim's Progress*, a story which professes to be a dream and flaunts its allegorical nature' (Lewis, 1998b, p89). According to Lewis this kind of criticism rejects the 'historical attachments' (Lewis, 1998b, p89) of a Gospel. Myths are different to the historicity and personality emerging from the Gospel accounts of miraculous events that the Bible maintains actually happened, and Lewis felt himself to be so steeped in myths that he, of all people, should know the difference. The Gospel account of John, for example, exhibits 'the whole technique of modern, novelistic, realistic narrative' (Lewis, 1998b, p90). Even if the account of John is untrue, the technique apparent in it is quite at odds with the kind of writing Lewis encountered in, say, writers of the second century who might have been responsible for generating such a Gospel. Thus Lewis argued that the sense of historical fact in the writings of the Gospels points to their reportage of what we consider to be myth, and so myth that actually happened.
- ⁵ See my second chapter 'C.S. Lewis, Ernst Cassirer and Myth' for the political dimension of mass mythical mentalities and the example of Glome's society.
- ⁶ For example, see Matthew 6:30 and 8:8-13 and 14:31. Also 'Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live' (John 11:25) and '...whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die' (John 11:26). Whilst it is unclear if Psyche's touch genuinely heals anyone, from a theological point of view, Psyche's action of going among the sick and diseased and giving succour and comfort provides a focus for their faith

in divinity. There is a Biblical parallel in Christ's curing of the sick through the faith people had in Him; and, as the people turn on Christ, so they turn on Psyche. Faith is the philosophical lynch-pin of the myth of Cupid and Psyche since later in the novel, when Psyche is the wife of the god of the mountain, she is forbidden to see the god. This lack of visual confirmation means that a key element of Psyche's sense perception is denied to her, thus she has to accept Cupid's love on faith. However, by lighting a lamp to illuminate the god, Psyche *sees* the god and is enraptured. In Apuleius' version the lamp drips hot oil on Cupid and he awakes to apparently exact a terrible revenge for his doubting wife's mistrust.

- 7 In light of the importance of Isis to Apuleius, whose work Lewis identified as the source for his retelling of the myth of Cupid and Psyche, it is interesting to note that in Egyptian mythology Isis was believed to control the Nile's flooding and therefore fecundity and growth (see Frazer, 1996, p445). See also Witt's comments on Isis and the fructification of the soil of the Nile (Witt, 1971, p19).
- 8 For Cassirer, in myth things are never contemplated passively, instead everything begins from attitude and is 'an act of the feeling and will' (Cassirer, 1955, p69).
- 9 On the identity of 'the god himself' (Manlove, 1987, p211) Colin Manlove says that 'He is not merely "pagan", he is one with the nature of Christ without being lost in any simple identification - golden with life as Pythian Apollo, yet in no way whim-led, a being who sums the essential supernatural fabric and law of being' (Manlove, 1987, p211).
- 10 For Griffiths, amongst others, the entirety of Apuleius' *The Golden Ass* is 'motivated by the desire to extol the goddess Isis' (Griffiths, 1978, p141). Thus Isis' mythology and symbolism are dominant themes throughout each of the books that comprise Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*.
- 11 See Frazer, 1996, p445. For Ungit's control of the river Shennit see Lewis, 1978b, p54.

- ¹² Frazer, 1996, p115, pp. 427-428 and pp. 519-527.
- ¹³ Lewis mentions this sense of premonition, or an echo back in time from the event of Christ's death, in many of his writings but most succinctly in his essay 'The Grand Miracle' (1945). It also emerges in 'Myth Became Fact' (1944) and 'Religion Without Dogma?' (1946).
- ¹⁴ Malachi 1:11-14.
- ¹⁵ See Malachi 1:11-14. Like Christ, when Psyche is seen after her sacrifice she appears to have changed her state. Bardia suspects that she is a wraith and Orual's first impression is that 'She was so brightface, as we say in Greek' (Lewis, 1978b, p111). Prior to her sacrifice Psyche refers to herself as 'the ransom for all Glome' (Lewis, 1978b, p80).
- ¹⁶ For Manlove the people of Glome prefer 'the faceless Ungit, blood-besmeared ... because it will take what form they choose' (Manlove, 1987, p212).
- ¹⁷ According to Harrison Aphrodite is intolerant of 'permanent patriarchal wedlock. In the lovely Homeric hymn it is clear that her will is for love, not marriage' (Harrison, 1980, p307). She is thus a goddess in conflict with the patriarchal Olympus. However, on her incorporation into the Greek pantheon and admission to Olympus an 'attempt foolish and futile is made to attach her to one husband, the craftsman Hephaistos, and, significantly enough, her other name as his bride is Charis (see *Il.* XVIII:382). She is the Charis of physical beauty incarnate' (Harrison, 1980, p308).
- ¹⁸ From Homer Harrison observed that Aphrodite was 'a new-comer to Olympus' (Harrison, 1980, p308). She wanted to escape back to her proper home because in Olympus she was 'an alien' (Harrison, 1980, p308).
- ¹⁹ Although Christianity is a monotheistic religion, its God has the different aspects of the Trinity of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit, see Matthew 28:19.

- 20 The fact that the shade-Fox says that Ungit's names number 'a thousand' (Lewis, 1978b, p306) suggests that Lewis did not want his fictional goddess to be precisely identifiable but to remain generalised. Ungit has many attributes that are reminiscent of the goddess Isis, a goddess who merged with many lesser deities and thus became known by the 'unique title "the one of countless names" (*myrionymos*). It is a title found in inscriptions of the second century A.D. from Nubia and Upper Egypt ... Dacia, Germany and northern France...' (Witt, 1971, p112){Witt's brackets}. Whilst the Fox identifies Ungit as Aphrodite, Doris Myers points out that, amongst others, 'Aphrodite ... was also identified with the Egyptian goddess Isis' (Myers, 1994, p197).
- 21 Plato suggested Daimones as intermediary gods between man and God (see Plato, *Symposuim*, 202c and d) and Marie Louise von Franz maintains that the minor god and goddess Cupid and Psyche can be viewed in this way (see von Franz, 1992, p81).
- 22 Lewis, 1978b, p40.
- 23 Lewis, 1978b, pp. 287-290.
- 24 Harrison observed that 'As man advanced in knowledge and in control over nature, the mystery and the godhead of things natural faded into science. Only the mystery of life, and love that begets life, remained, intimately realised and utterly unexplained; hence Aphrodite keeps her godhead to the end' (Harrison, 1980, p314).
- 25 Aphrodite, the goddess of love, is sometimes thought of as of the sea. She is often depicted rising from the sea. However, she also has associations with the air (see Harrison, 1980, p314).
- 26 Aphrodite is also recognised as 'the earth-born Kore' (Harrison, 1980, p314).

- 27 Harrison identifies these earlier godheads as ‘Ourania ... Harmonia ... Kourotrophos ... Eirene’ (Harrison, 1980, p315).
- 28 For Neumann ‘Aphrodite is seen as the embodiment of the Great Mother “The all-powerful goddess, the Great Mother, whose primordial image breathes an aura of witchcraft and magic...” ’ (Neumann cited in Krabbe, 1989, p94). The Mother is an appellation attributed to Isis, see Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, Book 11 and also Witt, 1971, Chapter 10.
- 29 Ungit’s rising from the earth recalls Harrison’s chapter ‘The Anodos of the Maiden Earth-Goddesses’ (see Harrison, 1980, pp. 276-283). From scenes on Greek vases etc., Harrison observed the various forms of the emergence of the Earth-goddess, often depicted rising from a mound or possibly emerging from a chasm. Picks and hammers are used to help break open the earth to release the goddess.
- 30 Osiris is one of the corn gods (see Frazer, 1996, p454), others include Attis and Adonis (see Frazer, 1996, p425 and p407 respectively). The myth of Osiris’ fragmentation and scattering suggests that “‘Osiris, the grain” had been “threshed” by Seth, the purveyor of dissension and chaos’ (Neumann cited in Knapp, 2001). Schultz notes a useful example of similar mythical thinking of the one and the many in Cassirer’s third volume of *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* because in the mythical world-view ‘One thing can be in two places at the same time; a rain god is in each drop of rain and in the drops sprinkled to make it rain (*PSF* III, 68)’ (Schultz, 2000, p59).
- 31 See Cassirer, 1955, pp 189-192. In many myths the one ‘divine being is broken into the multiplicity of the forms of this world and of men’ (Cassirer, 1955, p189) and Cassirer cites the myth of Osiris; the myth of Dionysus-Zagreus; the myth of Zeus shattering the Titans into ashes from which men arise, among other influences that lead him to this conclusion.
- 32 Man of classical times believed that he was ‘chosen by his soul demon’ (Cassirer, 1955, p172). However, in Plato’s republic, book 10, a new ‘ethical

freedom' (Cassirer, 1955, p173) emerges in the choice offered to the souls. See also Lewis, 1978b, pp. 292-293.

³³ Matthew 26:26, Mark 14:22, Luke 22:19, I Cr 10:16, I Cr 10:17, and I Cr 11:27.

³⁴ See Lewis, C.S., (1974) *Miracles*, Fount, p119.

³⁵ Orual has many identificational aspects during her journey to self knowledge, including her possessive affection for Psyche, her demonic underworld Ungit-self, her queenship that lessens her humanity, her role as judge presiding over her people, and her defining mentality that only seeing is believing. Over the course of her life she is a sister, half sister, student, daughter, queen and judge. Whilst, in an underworld vision, she identifies herself as Ungit, the god of the mountain declares to her that 'You also shall be Psyche' (Lewis, 1978b, p182). When this becoming is over she has transformed or become Psyche, thus the god of the grey mountain, a god that seems to merge into Christ at the culmination of the novel, then announces 'You are also Psyche' (Lewis, 1978b, p319).

³⁶ For Bergvall the central characters of Orual and Psyche retain their 'mythic qualities ... By living in a society steeped in myth they themselves become carriers of myth' (Bergvall, 1984, p6).

³⁷ The doctrine of exchange or substitution was promoted by Charles Williams, see Williams, C., (1949) *Descent into Hell*, Eerdmans, p99. Lewis commented on Williams' doctrine in *Arthurian Torso*. See also Williams, C., (1958) *The Image of the City and Other Essays*, Ridler, A., (Ed.) Oxford University Press, Chapter V.

³⁸ For Lewis 'Both Spenser's veiled Venus and his veiled Nature ... are to be regarded as symbols of God' (Lewis, 1967, p16). Lewis considered that there may be neo-platonic reasons for the veiling of the Spenserian Venus. The veil may conceal that 'Venus is hermaphroditic' (Lewis, 1967, p43). Her priests strive to conceal the answer to her veiling (*F.Q.*, IV, X, 41) and this led Lewis to suppose that in 'Neoplatonic thought ... it was fundamental that all great truths

should be veiled' (Lewis, 1967, p43). Spenser's veiling of nature recalled, for Lewis, Macrobius, *In somnium Scipionis*, I, ii, 17, where 'open exposition of herself is distasteful to Nature' (Macrobius, trans. Lewis, 1967, p43). He also refers to Plato's *Timaeus*, where Plato considers that the visible beauty of the Cosmos must be based upon 'a pattern no less than eternal' (Lewis, 1967, p43). Great emphasis is placed upon Una's unveiling in *The Faerie Queene* and for Lewis 'the characteristic of being veiled is shared by other Spenserian images of good. Venus and Nature themselves are in this life seen only under veils' (Lewis, 1967, p80). More broadly, Lewis maintained that 'veiling and unveiling are actions of key significance' (Lewis, 1967, p81) that extend to the various masked, armoured and otherwise disguised characters in Spenser's poem because this process reveals truth and falsity. Lewis noted Macrobius' comment that Nature denies men understanding and 'wished her secrets to be treated mythically (*per fabulosa*) by the prudent' (Macrobius trans. Lewis, 1967, p43).

39 During one of the rites of Osiris, Isis was represented by a 'cow-shaped image (that) symbolised the goddess searching for the dead body of Osiris' (Frazer, 1996, p449). Drawing upon Plutarch Frazer explains that among the various rites associated with Osiris 'the Egyptians accordingly observed mournful rites for four days ... During these four days a gilt cow swathed in a black pall was exhibited as an image of Isis. This, no doubt, was the image mentioned by Herodotus in his account of the festival' (Frazer, 1996, p450). The rites of Osiris are many and varied. However, they usually involve Isis searching for the dead Osiris who is eventually 'found' and believed to be restored to life in vegetation.

40 Isis' tears for her dead husband, Osiris, were believed to swell the river Nile, (see Frazer, 1996, p445).

41 Schultz, 2000, pp. 56-7.

42 See Eliade, 1970, pp. 170-173. Eliade observes that 'A great many myths mention stones as the bones of the Earth-Mother' (Elaide, 1960, p171).

43 See Cassirer, 1955, Vol. 1, p86.

- 44 Among the differences between Apuleius' version and Lewis' version of the myth Mara Donaldson points out that Lewis' telling is 'not a story of the frivolous relationships between the gods and their human consorts, or of the jealous mother-in-law' (Donaldson, 1988, p10).
- 45 Cassirer, 1955, p64, p144, p151, p171.
- 46 Matthew 10:34-39.
- 47 Zogy maintains that these four phases, along with a fifth called '*interposition*' (Zogby, 1977, p33), can be found in *Surprised by Joy* (1955). In their correct order they are '*interposition ... iconoclasm ... eucatastrophe ... ascent to the universal ... (and the) personal descent to the particular*' (Zogby, 1977, p33). However, only the 'final four moves are God's strategy against the hard-boiled dialectician' (Zogby, 1977, p33) and parallels the tasks Psyche undertakes to restore herself and Orual to 'divine favor' (Zogby, 1977, p33).
- 48 See Schultz, 2000, p71.

5

The Symbolic Form of Myth in *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*

For both Lewis and Cassirer mythical consciousness is the medium through which a purer, wholly religious, consciousness eventually emerges. Lewis took an unusual approach to his religious writings, stripping his art of ‘stained-glass and Sunday school associations’ (Lewis, 2000, p528). He returned to myth seeing it as the fundamental substratum needed to develop a religious consciousness.¹ Lewis felt this radical approach to be necessary because he found it ‘hard to feel as one was told one ought to feel about God or about the sufferings of Christ’ (Lewis, 2000, p527). To evoke that emotion he returned to the Form of fairy tale and the mythical elements such a Form incorporates. The fairy tale evoked for Lewis the mode of ‘The Fantastic or Mythical’ (Lewis, 2000, p528). Cassirer’s work reveals new insight into Lewis’ use of the mythical because Cassirer reconstructed the ‘principles of myth’ (Schultz, 2000, p31). Cassirer determined myth’s operation as a symbolic form that ‘makes its (own) worldview’ (Schultz, 2000, p31). In Cassirer’s view mythical consciousness has for its symbol the image, but mythical images are created in the consciousness holistically and thus composed of feelings, emotion, life and spirit. In Lewis’ autobiography he described his search for Joy and realisation that his desire couldn’t be satisfied internally since the object of his desire lay outward. He maintained that Joy can be reflected in many images each pointing to ‘the naked Other, imageless (though our imagination salutes it with a hundred images), unknown, undefined, desired’ (Lewis, 1977e, p177). A religious power can emerge from certain images. Similarly certain myths such as ‘the Garden of the Hesperides’ (Lewis, 1977e, p176) fuelled Lewis’ desire, leading him to the realisation that the source of Joy was God. Lewis went on to define and control the presentation of mythical images within his own myths, his fictional works.² He felt that the Fairy Tale could ‘give us experiences we have never had and thus, instead of “commenting on life”, can add to it’ (Lewis, 2000, p528). For Cassirer myth ‘includes not only verbal or written stories but also a type of perception,

actions, customs, images, and pictorial representations. Myth is a type of living, feeling, and knowing' (Schultz, 2000, p32) and 'the earliest way of "objectivization" or "self-revelation"' (Schultz, 2000, p32).

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (1950) suggests itself for the delineation of the symbolic form of myth because this book is an exemplar of Lewis' children's writing and because, as the first Narnia work, it remains closer to Lewis' initial Narnian vision. In a letter of 2nd December 1962 Lewis said that 'When I wrote *The Lion* I had no notion of writing the others' (Lewis, 1993, p506). Wider cosmic, theological, platonic and allegorical structures were developed by Lewis for the later Narnia books. Ford points out that 'When Lewis was writing LWW (*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*), he had not yet conceived of MN (*The Magician's Nephew*); thus, although he strives mightily to blend the two characterizations (of Jadis and the White Witch), there are loose ends and unanswered questions' (Ford, 1994, p441). This sense of mismatch between *The Lion* and the other Chronicles means that readings of *The Lion* as simply part of the series ignore or 'gloss over' the tensions between these works. Worse, the reading order can affect our enjoyment and thus the very feelings Lewis wanted to evoke. Logically, if we wanted to read a chronological history of Narnia, we should first read about the creation of Narnia in *The Magician's Nephew* (Lewis' prequel to *The Lion*), because this work explains how Narnia comes into being and how humans are its kings and queens and how a lamp-post exists there. However Duriez maintains that 'it is preferable to enjoy *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* first' (Duriez, 2000, p140) and Manlove notes that '*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* ... stands alone perhaps more than any other book of the Chronicles' (Manlove, 1993, p30).

For a host of reasons this work is unusual and does not quite mesh with the others, despite the author's efforts. For example, in *The Lion* the children are 'the sole humans in Narnia' (Manlove, 1987, p123), although in *The Magician's Nephew* we learn that there have been human kings and queens in Narnia since its creation. Those who were introduced to Narnia upon *The Lion's* first publication or who read this book first, encounter a Narnia that appears to be an environment echoing Spenser's endless fairy land in *The Faerie Queene*. Those readers are not immediately provided with explanations for why things are as they appear in Narnia. Narnia in *The Lion* is a world much more like Neverland in *Peter Pan*. Barrie, however, never allowed Peter to grow

up whilst Lewis wants his characters to grow both physically and spiritually. Readers of the other chronicles soon become aware that Narnia is simply a country with neighbouring countries such as Archenland, whilst in contrast *The Lion* closes with giant land lying North whilst other countries are 'beyond the sea' (Lewis, 1988b, p166). Thus some of Narnia's initial mythical impact as a special place, or world in a wardrobe, is lost. The question of why a book should be more enjoyable without detailed explanation recalls the curious qualities of myth. We do not really know the origins of myths, instead people are confronted with the intrinsically mythical. Close explanation leads us out of myth and into the realm of fact. One of the most significant things about *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* remains its mythic quality. This is the key factor in determining the symbolic form of myth and the kind of feelings, enjoyment and consciousness evoked. The central factor involved in the mythical foundation of *The Lion* emerges because 'Narnia in *The Lion* is increasingly and uniquely shot through with holiness, embodied in the coming and eventual victory of Aslan' (Manlove, 1993, p31). The holiness of Aslan is immanent in this work. As the story progresses, Narnia changes from the Witch's profane realm of ice and death to the sacred paradise that is Narnia permeated by the holiness of Aslan. It is as though Aslan's holiness baptises the Narnian realm. For Cassirer the sacred and the profane are 'the fundamental opposition' (Cassirer, 1955, p75) that structures both the religious and the mythical consciousness. Lewis takes this opposition and uses it to contrast the life and springtime generated by Aslan with the cold sterility, stasis and death forced upon Narnia by the Witch, (see below).

However, the opposition mentioned above is just one of the characteristics of myth identified by Cassirer. From earlier chapters we have observed how the various traits and characteristics of myth proposed by Cassirer can be identified within Lewis' fictions. Each Lewis' book considered in this thesis as a 'test case' has deployed these characteristics to various degrees, according to Lewis' intentions or myth's power. Whether Lewis used these traits unconsciously or intentionally, it is inevitable that they imprint themselves within his work since myth is not a neutral material.³ The more closely Lewis' art achieves myth the more distinct myth's phenomenology becomes. The symbolic form of myth in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* emerges through its symbolism (see *PSF I*, 86), worldview, space, time, number, inner form and dialectic. The relational nature of mythical causality helps us to comprehend Narnia as a spiritual whole. In many other ways too, as will be shown, *The Lion* beautifully

illustrates Cassirer's myth phenomenology. Cassirer observed the affinity of myth and dream and in *The Lion* dream is of profound significance (see Lewis, 1988b, p65 and p169). There are ritual connotations involved in the sacrifice of Aslan, and Cassirer's work offers pertinent insight into ritual and mythical thought. These points outline some of the ways in which Cassirer's work reveals a new appreciation of Lewis' fiction. However, critics might object that a children's work moves us further away from the anthropological study of primitive apperception from which Cassirer determined myth to be a symbolic form. Despite this criticism, and setting aside that this is to adopt a very narrow and flawed view of Cassirer's work, there are certain factors that make the genre of children's fantasy even more powerfully accessible to the function of myth. Children's works present a useful medium for myth because children have less developed abilities of abstraction. The less differentiated consciousness of the very young suggests an affinity with the kinds of consciousness that Cassirer discerned in early human development. With abstraction man rose out of 'the world of mythical consciousness, a world not of "things" and their "attributes" but of mythical potencies and powers, of demons and gods' (Cassirer, 1955, pxvi). These are the kinds of powers Lewis evokes in his Narnia books and, considering the popularity of these works, Children are evidently 'fertile ground' for fiction evoking the less abstract mode of consciousness that is mythical consciousness.⁴

In the opening of *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, the character Lucy Pevensie becomes dissociated from the familiar images that build up her world and her 'normal' mode of thought. She begins a process that continues until, by the close of Chapter Two, an entirely different worldview has been established. A transformation occurs from the general worldview of 1940s England to the worldview of mythical thought. She becomes immersed in mythical thought because myth is a fact in Narnia. The mythical worldview is considered to have been part of early human development, however Lucy discovers it to be a reality that exists parallel to the modern world in Narnia. Going into the wardrobe and finding Narnia means confronting a mythical worldview that is a reality. Her dissociation from the familiarity of accepted reality began back in England when the Pevensie children were separated from their parents and home. They arrive as evacuees at the home of an old professor. Isolated from their family, taken out of its hierarchy and familiar structures, the children are left to their own devices and explore the many rooms of the professor's old house.⁵ The discovery

of a way in to Narnia means that they have a new 'world' to explore. In a spare room the children find the wardrobe and, when Lucy is on her own, she looks inside and finds 'several coats hanging up - mostly long fur coats' (Lewis, 1988b, p12). Without hesitation she 'immediately stepped into the wardrobe and got in among the coats and rubbed her face against them' (Lewis, 1988b, p12). Moving further within, she finds more coats and 'It was almost quite dark in there and she kept her arms stretched out in front of her so as not to bump her face into the back of the wardrobe' (Lewis, 1988b, p13). The interesting thing here is the way that Lewis chooses to describe Lucy's crossing into the other world of Narnia. She becomes enfolded by fur, she cannot see or feel the back of the wardrobe and thus her expectations are denied. Whilst 'It is summer' (Lewis, 1988b, p17) in the England that Lucy leaves behind, she soon finds 'something crunching under her feet' (Lewis, 1988b, p13) and reaches down to experience 'something soft and powdery and extremely cold' (Lewis, 1988b, p13). Thus whilst we are given sensory information with which to build our image of Lucy's new environment, we are at first denied a visual impression. The world of expected phenomena is being re-written and replaced,

Next moment she found that what was rubbing against her face and hands was no longer soft fur but something hard and rough and even prickly. "Why, it is just like branches of trees!" exclaimed Lucy (Lewis, 1988b, p13).

Soon she sees a light ahead of her that resolves and reveals a familiar object, a lamp-post that is in the incongruous setting of the middle of a wood. Although it is night-time here in the wood, she can look back and see daylight filtering through the wardrobe from the spare room. She has undergone a reversal of sensual phenomena. She now senses cold when there was warmth, she is in the dark when it was day and she has emerged outside, into a wood, although she has physically moved further inside the wardrobe.

Lucy's reality has been inverted. The reality of England in summer has reformed into winter in an unknown wood. Woods have been used allegorically by poets to suggest the inner mind, or state of man.⁶ For Manlove Narnia is 'a fairy-tale world, (however) it does not stop being that while also being a landscape of the spirit frozen in primal sin' (Manlove, 1993, p33). The frozen wood presents a primal image symbolic of an inner spiritual state of man. It is primordial and archetypal. Movement into the wood transcends the physical limitations of the wardrobe and means confronting the opposition caused by it being winter when it was summer, night when it was day. For

Cassirer the opposition of day and night began the development, for primitive man, of 'the mythical feeling of space' (Cassirer, 1955, p96). The 'power which this antithesis exerts on the mythical consciousness' (Cassirer, 1955, p96) became a fundamentally formative factor in the development of religion. Whilst Cassirer's comments are an observation drawn from the insights of phenomenological and anthropological study of myth and religion, it is also highly significant that Lewis employs such an opposition for our introduction to Narnia. Whilst safety supposedly lies back in the normality of daytime England, that safety has been suborned by war. However, moving into the darkness and cold foretokens the evil that is afflicting Narnia. To overcome the dark forces permeating both worlds requires the 'higher' purifying power of goodness and sacral reality. Lewis thus draws upon ancient archetypes to introduce the 'characteristic mythical accent of the sacred and profane' (Cassirer, 1955, p97). Cassirer drew upon the work of Rudolf Otto for the idea of the sacred,⁷ and Lewis also turned to Otto primarily for the feeling content of religion (see Lewis, 1977b, p14; and my Chapter One). Even in the blackness of the wood, Lucy⁸ can take comfort from the fact that she literally 'sees the light' of the lamp-post. Light is a symbol of salvation and purity and has been recognised as such by both Cassirer and Lewis.⁹ The light cast by the lamp-post is both a practical illumination of the darkness and a beacon of faith maintained in Narnia's 'darkest hour'. Chapter One closes with the emergence into this light of a mythical being, a Faun.

The Faun's arrival confronts Lucy with a less primal, though no less mythic, image. He has an upper body shaped 'like a man' (Lewis, 1988b, p15), two horns on his head, and 'his legs were shaped like a goat's (the hair on them was glossy black) and instead of feet he had goat's hoofs. He also had a tail' (Lewis, 1988b, p15). From Cassirer's myth phenomenology Schultz observes that

Mythical symbols undergo constant metamorphosis (people are thought to change into animals or gods) and there are heterogeneous combinations of symbols (half-woman, half lion, and wings) (Schultz, 2000, p59).

Among the many transformations made by the Witch in *The Lion*, she also transforms herself and her dwarf into a boulder and a tree stump respectively (see Lewis, 1988b, p125). However, the image of the Faun encountered by Lucy is augmented by Lewis for the purposes of his children's story. Thus we are not presented with a faun manifesting the mythical intensity of the kind that affected Ransom during his encounter with the Perelandran mermen. Instead the power of the image is softened, we are given the

reality of a faun living with winter conditions, wearing a 'red woollen muffler' (Lewis, 1988b, p15) and carrying an umbrella and some brown paper parcels. These things augment the image. They are items recognised from the social world of man and thus they make the outlandish figure of the faun assume a kind of familiarity. He looked 'just as if he had been doing his Christmas shopping' (Lewis, 1988b, p15) and is thus engaged in both a routine and benign seasonal task. In 'It All Began With a Picture...' (1960) Lewis described how he 'came to write *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*' (Lewis, 2000, p529). He considered the actual writing of the book to be an experience and not something he felt comfortable discussing as an abstraction. However, 'The *Lion* all began with a picture of a faun carrying an umbrella and parcels in a snowy wood. This picture had been in my head since I was about sixteen. Then one day, when I was about forty, I said to myself: "let's try to make a story about it' (Lewis, 2000, p529). Lewis' creative process recalls Cassirer's view that mythical thought exhibits a 'subjection to the impression itself and its momentary "presence"' (Cassirer, 1955, p35). The image of the faun evidently made an impression that haunted Lewis precisely because of its affect on the consciousness.

However, it is one of the inherent contradictions of myth that it can be both an image and also a story, or sequential series of events. For Lewis myth is not only image and story but also something that rises beyond a story's sequential structure.¹⁰ Considered holistically a myth that is a story can be contemplated as an object.¹¹ The extension of the impression of a faun in a winter scene into the myth of the children's Narnian adventure is a poeticising or a mythmaking. In 'Three Ways of Writing for Children' (1952) Lewis commented on his personal way of writing a story, 'I see pictures. Some of these pictures have a common flavour, almost a common smell, which groups them together' (Lewis, 2000, p513). These pictures can join together naturally, but 'more often ... there are gaps. Then at last you have to do some deliberate inventing' (Lewis, 2000, p513). In Lewis' personal experience 'images will always come first' (Lewis, 2000, p513). For his creation of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the faun image came first and exuded a power for Lewis. The story or myth he invented from the image followed much later. In 'Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's to be Said' (1956) Lewis explains that the material for a story 'bubbles up' and that the author then longs 'for a Form' (Lewis, 2000, p526) in which to mould his work. He denied that his desire for Christian allegory came first and said of Narnia that

Everything began with images; a faun carrying an umbrella, a queen on a sledge, a magnificent lion. At first there wasn't even anything Christian about them; that element pushed itself in of its own accord. It was part of the bubbling (Lewis, 2000, p527).

It would, however, be a mistake to assume that these images are just personal to Lewis. In 'Three Ways of Writing For Children' Lewis noted that 'For Jung, fairy tale liberates Archetypes which dwell in the collective unconscious, and when we read a good fairy tale we are obeying the old precept "Know thyself"' (Lewis, 2000, p509). For Lewis the 'presence of beings other than human which yet behave, in varying degrees, humanly: the giants and dwarfs and talking beasts ... (are) an admirable hieroglyphic which conveys psychology, types of character, more briefly than novelistic presentation ...' (Lewis, 2000, p509). However, whilst psychology is conveyed through such images, in 'Psychoanalysis and Literary Criticism' (1942) Lewis rejected Freud's notion that images drawn from the subconscious should be explained solely through their reduction to the theme of sexual repression. Carl Jung, who was Freud's protégé until he broke away from Freud, proposed instead that there exists a 'collective unconscious which is common to the whole human race' (Lewis, 1969, p297). This is 'pre-logical and its reactions are expressed not in thought but in images. Myths, or at any rate the older and greater myths, are such images recovered from the collective unconscious' (Lewis, 1969, p297). These images induce a kind of collective emotional response. This notion appealed to the poetic or mythical imagination of Lewis. In contrast to Lewis' rejection of Freud's reduction of images to sexual symbolism, he found Jung's approach to be a 'much more civil and humane interpretation of myth and imagery' (Lewis, 1969, p296). Similarly, as Kirk notes, 'Cassirer had little use for Freud, since the heavy stress on sexuality conflicted with his own conception of the dignity of culture' (Kirk, 1998, p263; see my Introduction). Cassirer also found some agreement with Jung's view of mythical images as a 'community phenomena' (Schultz, 2000, p235) in which symbols become more universal. For Lewis, the problem with psychological interpretation of primordial images or archetypal patterns is that their very mention summons such images (see Lewis, 1969, p299; and my Introduction). However, unlike materialism, psychoanalysis gives back a 'kind of depth' (Lewis, 1969, p299), according to Lewis. Whilst Lewis felt we should be cautious about accepting Jung's explanation of such images, 'he is quite right in claiming that certain images, in

whatever material they are embodied, have a strange power to excite the human mind' (Lewis, 1969, p299). Somehow 'great myth' (Lewis, 1969, p299) evokes a special 'leap in our blood' (Lewis, 1969, p299) and this, for Lewis, is not to be explained away by the inherent reductiveness of Freud's theory or the mutual self-perpetuation involved in Jung's. Again and again Lewis returned to myth and imagery in order to gain certain aesthetic experiences that led him ultimately to believe their power came from something outside himself (see Lewis, 1977e, p177). Whilst Cassirer doesn't answer the question of whether we will find God through myth and images, he saw the mind, life and spirit as adding to the image and explored this through a holistic study of the phenomenology of myth (see *PSF* I, pp. 82-111). In Cassirer's view, it is an inherent power of body, mind and spirit that identifies images with the character of the sacred (see below).

By developing the image of the faun Lewis is doing something quite specific with extant mythical materials. He has repackaged them for the consumption of a younger audience so that a classical mythical being, surely a very disturbing thing to encounter, becomes homely, not a completely alien, magical terror. The Faun is as surprised as Lucy by their encounter. Although their encounter is tempered by the medium of children's fiction, it is still a collision of two worlds that are generally entirely separate and in many ways antithetical. In Chapter 2 the Faun displays little knowledge of humans, only the kind of third-hand speculations of the kind that any man might display when confronted by a mythical being made suddenly real. Lucy is just as mythical to the Faun as he is to her.

During Lucy's conversation with the Faun many different mythical elements are introduced. These are not necessarily elements from one system of myths or a singular mythology, instead this is the beginning of an incredibly complex mixing of diverse mythical elements. The Faun considers Lucy to be a 'Daughter of Eve' (Lewis, 1988b, p16) and thinks that a boy would be 'a Son of Adam' (Lewis, 1988b, p16), thus Biblical myth follows hard on the heels of the introduction of this pagan mythical figure. Describing the realm of Narnia, the Faun mentions 'the great castle of Cair Paravel on the eastern sea' (Lewis, 1988b, p17). This reference evokes a castle of the kind familiar to those acquainted with Arthurian legend. As the story progresses all manner of mythical beings are introduced, including dryads, naiads, giants, unicorns, centaurs, talking animals and, most contentiously, Father Christmas.¹² This is a mustering of

mythical images drawn from different mythologies and different periods of human development, but all these, often disparate, elements have in common their contribution to the development of 'humanization and individualization' (Cassirer, 1955, pp. 195-196) and the growth of human consciousness. It is interesting to note that Cassirer links this development with art which he proposed as a central factor in the distinction of the human form from animal or heterogeneous forms. In this process 'poetry plays a role almost equal to that of art' (Cassirer, 1955, p196) and Lewis has the Narnian character Mr Beaver recite the myths of Narnia in the form of rhymes. These rhymes are folk tales or myths handed down to each generation of Narnians (see Lewis, 1988b, pp. 75-76).

Considered in isolation, as a purely static image, the faun has a symbolic value. However Lewis wove such mythical images into his story, and made these images interact, involving them in 'actions' that he generated as linkages between the images. Thus his mythical images become part of a Narnian fairy tale. The images thus take on a kind of sequential 'life' within a myth of Lewis' devising. Cassirer included actions in his broad definition of myth (see Schultz, 2000, p32; and my previous chapter) and we can observe the particularly mythical nature of the main actions in *The Lion*, for example, in the sacrifice and resurrection of Aslan, or Aslan's release of the Witch's prisoners, and through the dissolving of winter into spring by the presence of Aslan. We are no sooner introduced to the idea of Aslan being in Narnia than we are told in the same sentence that he is 'on the move' (Lewis, 1988b p65), his actions are mythically bound to the changes that occur in Narnia.

The Faun tells Lucy that his name is Tumnus. Patterson observes that this is the diminutive of Vertumnus,¹³ a god associated with harvests in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Bk. XIV). In the myth of Vertumnus, the god falls in love with Pomona, a 'Latin wood nymph' (Ovid, 1967, p328)¹⁴ and during his courtship he often disguised himself. Sometimes he would be 'a rough harvester ...carry(ing) ears of corn in his basket, the very image of a real harvester!' (Ovid, 1967, p328). His disguises were usually associated with harvesting and growth and adopted in order to 'enjoy the sight of her (Pomona's) beauty' (Ovid, 1967, p328). The last disguise of Vertumnus is that of an old crone, but this falsity is revealed when, through exasperation, he divests himself of the 'trappings of age ... (and) appeared to the girl in all his glory, as when the sun's brilliant orb conquers the clouds that veil his face, and shines forth undimmed' (Ovid, 1967, pp. 331-332). Pomona becomes 'entranced by the god's beauty' (Ovid, 1967, p332) and

smitten with 'a passion equal to his' (Ovid, 1967, p332). Similarly a deception is also played upon Lucy by Tumnus since he decides to lure her back to his cave, treat her to a sumptuous tea, and then turn her over to the White Witch who holds Narnia in eternal winter. Like Vertumnus, Tumnus also admits his deception although, possibly because this is a children's work, the overtones of sexual maturation are left undeveloped.¹⁵

Tumnus, considered through Cassirer's myth phenomenology as a mythical symbol, although manlike, is more animal than man. He is thus a symbol confused with the whole,¹⁶ or wider, sense of nature, and a personification of nature. Lucy quickly develops an emotional bond with Tumnus and the Faun is the kind of mythical figure that Cassirer called 'subordinate nature demons' (Cassirer, 1955, p112). His suborning by the Witch is an insidious evil that almost turns his heart as cold as the winter into which Narnia is locked.¹⁷ The personifying of nature through mythical fauns and the view of Narnia as a landscape of the soul recalls conceptions of primitive animism. The control exerted upon the very conditions, seasons and life of Narnia recalls the human belief 'in friendly and hostile powers which intervene arbitrarily and capriciously in events' (Cassirer, 1955, p113). Narnia's nature and seasons are a battleground over which seasonal deities hold sway. However, the 'eternal winter' is a holding back of the natural cycle, thus it is an unnatural disruption to Narnia's seasonal cyclic rhythm. For Cassirer

all the forces of nature are for myth nothing other than expressions of a demonic or divine will. This principle constitutes the source of light, which for myth progressively illuminates the whole of reality and outside of which there is no possibility of understanding the world (Cassirer, 1955, p49).

Cassirer saw the condition of man as composed of the rational and irrational working side by side in the mind, along with many other attributes such as the human ability to live in a symbolic universe. In Lewis' introduction to Narnia the rational world of civilised man has succumbed to the crisis of World War II. The bastions of English civilisation, the cities, surely potent symbols of human 'progress', are no longer safe and so people are retreating to the heart-lands of the countryside; it is as evacuees that the children find their way in to Narnia. The movement into Narnia can be viewed as a journey into the imagination of C.S. Lewis.¹⁸ What they encounter in Narnia is a world structured by myth. It is an environment first introduced through sensual experiences because Lewis wants us to know it concretely and thus accept that myth is

the reality of Narnia. Fur coats were familiar items in the 1950s, no doubt Lewis' young readers could put fur to their skin and imagine the sensation of touching the mane of Aslan.¹⁹ When Susan and Lucy accompany Aslan on his way to be sacrificed,

the girls did what they would never have dared to do without his permission, but what they had longed to do ever since they first saw him - buried their cold hands in the beautiful sea of fur and stroked it and, so doing, walked with him (Lewis, 1988b, p136).

Doris Myers maintains that in *The Lion* 'Lewis uses images of cosiness, nourishment, and furriness to produce an emotional affirmation of courage, honour, and kindness. He uses images of cold, hunger, and stoniness to produce an emotional rejection of cowardice and treachery' (Myers, 1994, p128). However, for Myers, his images involving 'furriness are not unambiguously good or bad, for fur is much more basic to the tone and theme of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* than a black-hat/white-hat morality' (Myers, 1994, p129). Instead Myers suggests that Lewis' use of this imagery recalls early childhood imagination and the kind of romantic Joy Lewis found in the furry toys of his childhood, as well as the broader re-imagining of people's association of fur with nature. The entrance to Narnia with its fur imagery is an enabling or finding, for Myers, of the children's 'heart's desire, the ability to communicate with Nature as symbolized by talking beasts and mythological creatures such as fauns and satyrs, dryads and naiads, giants and centaurs' (Myers, 1994, p129). For Myers 'Furriness is thus a symbol for Nature, which in one sense is neither good nor bad' (Myers, 1994, p130). Cassirer maintained that mythical images are value laden, and composed of feeling and emotion.²⁰ The fur symbolism also works in a similar way to the image of the Faun since both blur the identity of man with nature reminding us that man is part of nature whilst also able to consider it in abstraction. In the anthropological history of man, Cassirer observed the way that such imagery reflected 'a *crisis* in the development of the human self-consciousness' (Cassirer, 1955, p195), and the stages that took man from complete metamorphosis in which gods took the form of animals, to the more 'hybrid forms' (Cassirer, 1955, p195) associated with part man part animal, such as fauns. Tumnus' faun image reminds us that 'Other Greek combinations are minotaurs (half man, half bull), mermaids, pan (half goat, half man), and pegasus (a horse with wings)' (Schultz, 2000, p147). These are 'heterogeneous forms' (Schultz, 2000, p147) and thus 'an advance in mythical thinking, on Cassirer's view (*PSF* II, 47)' (Schultz, 2000, p147). An interesting aspect in Lewis' mythopoeia is his merging of mythical

images, although he is not evoking stages of human development so much as forging a special relationship between children and nature. This merging was distasteful to Tolkien and yet it is a distinguishing feature of Lewis' children's works (see Sayer, 1997, pp. 311-313). Later in *The Lion*, when the good Narnians congregate around Aslan, Lewis includes a 'bull with the head of a man' (Lewis, 1988b, p115). In contrast, in the congregation of evil Narnians summoned around the Witch, there are 'bull-headed men' (Lewis, 1988b, p138). There may be a suggestion in this not only of a blurring with nature but also of the role of reason in allowing ourselves to succumb to animality and base forces. Either we fall into the service of the Witch or acknowledge our part in nature whilst maintaining our reason, thus keeping our head and so choosing Aslan.

The world of Narnia removes Lucy's sense of the familiar, the assurance of the logical ordering of the world that man has reduced to cause-chains, empiricism, causality and reason. In contrast to this narrow view that is the type of thought prevalent in our world, a very different world-view emerges in Narnia. During Lucy's tea with Tumnus the Faun describes his world, explaining that in Narnia nymphs live in wells, dryads live in trees and there was much dancing, hunting and jollity. There were happy times before the Witch; and occasionally the land was visited by gods such as Bacchus followed by Silenus on his donkey. Guerber explains that 'Bacchus was appointed god of wine and revelry, and entrusted to the guidance of Silenus, a satyr, half man and half goat ...(who) accompanied him on all his travels' (Guerber, 2000, p127). In *The Lion* Tumnus explains that Bacchus made Narnia's streams 'run with wine instead of water' (Lewis, 1988b, p21) and on those happy occasions there were revels that lasted for weeks.²¹ Ford observes that whilst in Roman mythology the god of wine and ecstasy is known as Bacchus, 'in Greek mythology, he is named Dionysus' (Ford, 1994, p71). For Cassirer the cult of Dionysus is one of several cults in which man

is impelled to burst through the barrier that separates him from the universe of living things, to intensify the life feeling in himself to the point of liberating himself from his generic or individual *particularity*. This liberation is achieved in wild, orgiastic dances which restore man's identity with the original source of life (Cassirer, 1955, pp. 188-189).

Thus it is the more shocking that 'the White Witch has converted Narnia to a mirror image of herself in the form of one monotonous dead white' (Manlove, 1993, p38).

After admitting his deception to Lucy, the contrite Tumnus covertly returns her to the

lamp-post explaining that they must be careful because ‘The whole wood is full of *her* spies. Even some of the trees are on her side’ (Lewis, 1988b, p25). The trees are invested with the mythical life feeling and are a clear example of Lewis’ realisation of nature myth.²² Again, as we saw in *Perelandra*, every aspect of Narnia is poeticised, recalling eras of human history when for the ancient poets things had divinity and the gods about them; in the hills and mountains dwelt nymphs known as oreads whilst in the trees lived dryads (see Cassirer, 1972, p153). Lewis thus reveals Narnia to be a world having the qualities associated with what Cassirer termed a ‘divine age’ (Cassirer, 1972, p154), although it falls to the power of Aslan to restore that divine age in Narnia by unlocking the life feeling through re-introducing spring time.

Narnia also has its own myths, such as the story that freedom from the grip of the Witch will occur when ‘the four thrones at Cair Paravel are filled’ (Lewis, 1988b, p24), a legend that the children’s involvement makes into a reality. This falls into what Cassirer terms ‘culture myths’ (Cassirer, 1955, p204), and he saw these as a progression in the history of human development from the more basic ‘nature myths’ (Cassirer, 1955, p204). There may also be some significance in the number of children, perhaps because four is a mythical number with special Christian significance (see previous chapter). Tumnus also relates stories of the hunting of the ‘milk-white stag who could give you wishes if you caught him’ (Lewis, 1988b, p20). However, the central relationship between Narnia and Earth is that the inhabitants of each world think that those living in the other are mythical.²³ This is reinforced by Lucy’s observation of Mr Tumnus’ bookshelf which contains works such as ‘*The Life and Letters of Silenus* or *Nymphs and Their Ways* or *Men, Monks and Gamekeepers; a Study in Popular Legend* or *Is Man a Myth?*’ (Lewis, 1988b, p19). We can see from these titles that whilst Silenus, a Satyr of GraecoRoman myth who was the ‘son of Hermes or Pan’ (Grant, 1962, p444) and a companion to Bacchus in human mythology, is real in Narnia, in contrast man is questioned as a myth. Similarly nymphs are real whilst men, monks and gamekeepers are popular legend.

On returning through the wardrobe from her first journey into Narnia, Lucy finds that no time at all has passed for her siblings on Earth. No one believes her and whilst the doubts of her elder brother and sister emerge from genuine concern, her younger brother, Edmund ‘was spiteful’ (Lewis, 1988b, p29) and ‘sneered and jeered at Lucy’ (Lewis, 1988b, p29). He sadistically ridicules her for what she believes in

because she cannot support her belief with proof of her experiences. Eventually Lucy begins to doubt herself but she is able to find Narnia again, and is followed on this occasion by Edmund. On this excursion, Edmund encounters one of the most powerful mythical images ever created by Lewis. He meets the White Witch, who informs him she is the 'Queen of Narnia' (Lewis, 1988b, p34). She rides on a sledge pulled by reindeer that are 'so white that even the snow hardly looked white compared with them' (Lewis, 1988b, p32). They are adorned with gilded horns and red harnesses, and driven by a dwarf. The Queen's face is 'white - not merely pale, but white like snow or paper or icing-sugar, except for her very red mouth' (Lewis, 1988b, p33). She is beautiful and proud but also 'cold and stern' (Lewis, 1988b, p33). During the story the children learn that she wants the Narnians to believe that she is human. This is her claim to dominion over Narnia. However, in reality 'there isn't a drop of real human blood in the Witch' (Lewis, 1988b, p76). Her lineage is derived from 'Adam's first wife, her they called Lilith. And she was one of the Jinn. That's what she comes from on one side. And on the other she comes of the giants' (Lewis, 1988b, p76). Ford notes that Lilith is

A female demon of both Babylonian mythology and the Hebrew tradition, who murders newborn babies, harms women in childbirth, and haunts wildernesses on the lookout for children (Ford, 1994, p269).²⁴

She is 'bad all through' (Lewis, 1988b, p77), a false human and therefore a false queen.²⁵ The children are warned against false humans, 'when you meet anything that's going to be human and isn't yet, or used to be human once and isn't now, or ought to be human and isn't, you keep your eyes on it and feel for your hatchet' (Lewis, 1988b, p77).

To the Witch the boy is a portent from 'the world of men' (Lewis, 1988b, p35). Her first thought is to destroy Edmund with her wand but instead she decides to use him and plies him with 'enchanted Turkish Delight ... that anyone who had once tasted it would want more and more of it, and would even, if they were allowed, go on eating it till they killed themselves' (Lewis, 1988b, p38). The enchanted Turkish Delight evokes an image of greed and the sickly sweet craving for sweets that both rot children's teeth and moral fibre. The Witch also appeals to Edmund's gullibility by offering to make him a prince and give him Narnia if he will lure his friends into her power. The use of Turkish Delight, an enchanted sweet conjured by the Witch, is a deceptive way for Lewis to re-invent for a children's fantasy a particularly mythical conception of food.

When the children later come into Narnia and find themselves betrayed by Edmund, they learn from a talking animal that Edmund was immediately recognised as having 'the look of one who has been with the Witch and eaten her food. You can always tell them if you've lived long in Narnia; something about their eyes' (Lewis, 1988b, p80). The eating of the queen's food is the passing on to Edmund of her 'mythical force' (Cassirer, 1955, p57). However, that force is evil, she is a concentration of evil, a distillation into a mythical personification. For Manlove a sense of evolution occurs since the Witch first appears to be 'something straight out of Hans Christian Andersen' (Manlove, 1993, p33) and eventually emerges as 'an agent of ultimate evil ... and ancient enemy of Aslan' (Manlove, 1993, p33). Evil is not simply an abstract concept in Narnian, but a force made manifest and concrete. The Witch's *mana*²⁶ is corrupt, and its passing to Edmund is the corruption into evil of his already disagreeable character. The accepting into himself of the Witch's food is also the recognition that a spiritual attribute can be 'bound up with some specific material substratum' (Cassirer, 1955, p56). In this sense, the Turkish Delight is not merely symbolic but also one of the Witch's 'true talismans' (Cassirer, 1955, p57) since it passes her evil into Edmund. The Witch can be viewed as a store of evil, evil is her 'substantial whole' (Cassirer, 1955, p57) from which, through her magic, 'parts can detach themselves and enter into another individual' (Cassirer, 1955, p57).

On returning to Earth Edmund feels sick and denies the existence of Narnia when questioned by Peter and Susan, although he now knows the truth of it. This act is acknowledged by the omniscient narrator as 'one of the nastiest things in this story' (Lewis, 1988b, p44). Edmund's act was 'the meanest and most spiteful thing he could think of' (Lewis, 1988b, p44). Concerned for Lucy's sanity, Peter and Susan seek the old Professor's advice concerning the behaviour of their sister. For Peter proof of Lucy's claims for the existence of another world rests in the reassurance of the evidence, being able to see it and therefore verify it on demand. Since they cannot see Lucy's Narnia, they conclude that it doesn't exist. The professor, however, factors in other elements (see Lewis, 1988b, pp. 46-48), and proposes the inductive argument that Lucy has in all particular examples of her behaviour been the more honest when compared to Edmund. Therefore her account is the more likely to be truthful. The irony of this is that the professor uses 'Logic!' (Lewis, 1988b, p47) to argue *for* the existence of 'another world' (Lewis, 1988b, p48) in which mythical beings, such as those that

anthropologists consider to have emerged from the irrational thought of ancient man, are a reality.

Soon, to escape from the housekeeper and her guests, all the children enter the wardrobe together and arrive in Narnia. Edmund's calumny is exposed and Lucy takes them to Mr Tumnus' cave. However, Tumnus has been taken by Maugrim the grey wolf who is 'Captain of the Secret Police' (Lewis, 1988b, p57) and Tumnus' home has been defiled. Now the children are presented with a moral obligation. They are indirectly responsible for Tumnus' fate since he wouldn't have been taken prisoner but for his sheltering of Lucy. Susan suggests they go home, Lucy argues for helping Tumnus, and Edmund thinks about himself pointing out that they haven't any food. However both Susan and Peter have feelings about what they must now do (see Lewis, 1988b, p58). Thus the noble choice is made to stay and do what they can in order to put things right. The children soon discover other friendly inhabitants of Narnia in the form of first a robin and then Mr and Mrs Beaver. The Beavers shelter them from the Witch and give them food, but Edmund steals away to alert the Witch to their presence. On first encountering Mr Beaver, the children hear the name Aslan mentioned. This has a curious affect on them. Although 'None of the children knew who Aslan was any more than you do ... the moment the Beaver had spoken these words everyone felt quite different' (Lewis, 1988b, p65). The experience is compared to the 'enormous meaning' (Lewis, 1988b, p65) imparted by something told to you in a dream that may turn that dream into something beautiful or terrifying, 'It was like that now. At the name of Aslan each one of the children felt something jump in its inside' (Lewis, 1988b, p65).

This power of the name recalls Cassirer's view of the hypostatic power of the symbolism of language (see Langer, 1949, pp. 385-386). It is also an early intimation of emotion, holiness and the otherness of Aslan (see Otto, 1958, Chp. 1-6). Later, during tea with the Beavers, again Aslan is mentioned and 'once again that strange feeling - like the first signs of spring, like good news, had come over them' (Lewis, 1988b, p74). In an environment where myth is fact, it is not surprising that Aslan's name should provoke a mythical affect. Study of the names of gods and mythical thought reveals 'an understanding of the process by which religious concepts are formed' (Cassirer, 1955, p22). Cassirer observed Usner's view that 'linguistic and mythical elements become inseparable correlates' (Cassirer, 1955, p22; see also Cassirer, *Sprache und Mythos*). The essence of the gods emerges through their names in the mythical world. However,

for Lewis, Aslan is not just mythical and a fact on Narnia, but also ‘the son of the great Emperor-beyond-the-Sea’ (Lewis, 1988b, p75) and known by a different name on Earth. He is the Incarnation of God into a Narnian, and thus holiness is also inherent in Aslan’s name. The reactions of the children on first hearing his name vary,

Peter felt suddenly brave and adventurous. Susan felt as if some delicious smell or some delightful strain of music had just floated by her. And Lucy got the feeling you have when you wake up in the morning and realize that it is the beginning of the holidays or the beginning of summer (Lewis, 1988b, p65).

The mention of Aslan’s name induces courage in Peter and a ‘longing to see him’ (Lewis, 1988b, p75) although he also feels ‘frightened when it comes to the point’ (Lewis, 1988b, p75). In contrast, the first mention of Aslan causes Edmund to feel ‘a sensation of mysterious horror’ (Lewis, 1988b, p65). These emotive reactions recall Cassirer’s view that in myth there is no ‘passive contemplation of things’ (Cassirer, 1955, p69) instead myth begins from ‘an attitude, an act of the feeling’ (Cassirer, 1955, p69). There may also be a link here to the kind of consciousness Cassirer identified as the “‘natural,” immediate linguistic consciousness’ (Cassirer, 1955, p25) when the world of language was ‘embedded’ (Cassirer, 1955, p25) in the world of myth and ‘the essence of the thing is mediately designated in the word and at the same time in some way contained and present in it’ (Cassirer, 1955, p25). For both ‘primitives and children’ (Cassirer, 1955, p25) Cassirer observed a ‘concrecence of name and thing in the linguistic consciousness’ (Cassirer, 1955, p25). There is also a relational sense involved, a mythical causation as opposed to the logic of ordinary causation whereby the name of Aslan affects people with a measure of the same influence and power as Aslan himself. Thus, as is repeatedly revealed, the Witch simply cannot abide the very mention of Aslan. This is because Aslan’s name affects people with both mythical and religious qualities. These include goodness, the sacred, and holiness (see below).

Cassirer’s phenomenology reveals that for myth, ‘All reality and all events are projected into the fundamental opposition of the sacred and profane’ (Cassirer, 1955, p75). This is the ‘mythical “illumination”’ (Cassirer, 1955, p75) cast even upon time and characterising time in terms of phases.²⁷ For Mr Beaver Aslan’s arrival is yearned for because only then ‘The evil time will be over and done’ (Lewis, 1988b, p76). Thus Mr Beaver is experiencing a profane time created by the Witch’s baleful influence. However Cassirer proposed that whilst ordinarily there is a rhythm and periodicity ‘felt

in all immediate life and existence' (Cassirer, 1955, p112), the notion of destiny introduces a change because 'Only thus seen as destiny does mythical time become a truly cosmic potency - a power binding not only man but also the demons and gods' (Cassirer, 1955, p112). It is the children's destiny to fulfil the Narnian prophecy of becoming human kings and queens of Narnia, 'it's a saying in Narnia time out of mind that when two Sons of Adam and two Daughters of Eve sit in those four thrones (in Cair Paravel castle), then it will be the end not only of the White Witch's reign but of her life' (Lewis, 1988b, p77). The children's participation in Narnia means that they become myth there. For Manlove the children experience a 'loss of former self ... Lewis has steadily moved the children away from their old selves and understandings until they become wholly part of another world' (Manlove, 1993, p34). Lewis achieves this affect through the power of myth, mythical symbols and the mythical world-view. Eventually, accepting Aslan as divine means that the children emerge into a purer more wholly religious world-view. This is the inevitable outcome of their journey, a journey not just through Narnia but also a spiritual progression.

Within *The Lion* there are two different journeys made by the children. On the one hand Peter, Susan and Lucy walk with the Beavers whilst spring-time breaks out in Narnia as the Witch's spell is broken. Meanwhile Edmund, in the Witch's power, is taken on a journey to intercept his siblings but he suffers hunger, cold, and the cruelty of the Witch. As both journeys progress their dream-like qualities become apparent. Edmund tries to make himself 'believe that the whole thing was a dream' (Lewis, 1988b, p104) in the hope that he may wake from a nightmare. This desire for his experience to be a dream seems to become a reality, 'as they went on, hour after hour, it did come to seem like a dream' (Lewis, 1988b, p105). This sense emerges from the monotony and the endless drudgery to which Edmund is subjected during the Witch's relentless pursuit. Meanwhile, as the Witch grows increasingly frustrated by the outbreak of spring and the weakening of her spell, Peter, Susan and Lucy have a markedly different experience. They also walk on and 'on hour after hour' (Lewis, 1988b, p113) but they walk 'into what seemed a delicious dream' (Lewis, 1988b, p113). Lewis' introduction of the contrasting dream states, according to the children's movement through Narnia, has implications for myth because it is one of the 'characteristic(s) of mythical thinking' (Cassirer, 1955, p36) that the 'picture of reality' (Cassirer, 1955, p36) loses depth and definition, objective reality succumbs to a state

between reality and ‘the world of dream’ (Cassirer, 1955, p36). Perception is affected and the children’s movement into the dreamlike corresponds to their increasing movement into, and involvement with, Narnia.²⁸

The culmination of the children’s ‘delicious dream’ occurs with their arrival before ‘God’ when they encounter the divine lion Aslan. Aslan is the most important image that Lewis’ created for *The Lion*. He explained that when he was writing *The Lion* he was ‘having a good many dreams of lions about that time’ (Lewis, 2000, p529). The figure of Aslan had a compelling power upon Lewis’ imagination, and he found himself wanting to write the other Chronicles.²⁹ Whilst Aslan’s name³⁰ works a curiously expressive power upon the Pevensie children whenever they hear it, awakening strange feelings within them, this sense of imparted experience is carried to new levels when they are finally confronted by Aslan and an even deeper set of reactions occur. This is a striving on Lewis’ part to create not only a mythical image, but also an image that rises into the purer form of religious thought. This type of thought introduces the holy, religion, nobility and ethics, the latter being demonstrated by Aslan’s following of the Emperor’s law even though it costs his life. It is thus a progression from the sense of the sacred that underpins mythical images, according to the phenomenological traits of such images documented by Cassirer. On first encountering Aslan the narrator tells us that ‘People who have not been in Narnia sometimes think that a thing cannot be good and terrible at the same time’ (Lewis, 1988b, pp. 115-117). This curious dichotomy reminds us of Cassirer’s views on the sacred as simultaneously being both ‘the distant and the near, as the familiar and protective but at the same time absolutely inaccessible, as the *mysterium tremendum* and the *mysterium fascinosum*’ (Cassirer, 1955, p78; see also Otto, 1958). Cassirer observed that this ‘twofold character of the sacred has been particularly stressed by Rudolf Otto’ (Cassirer, 1955, p78). It emerged in Otto’s book *Das Heilige*, English translation *The Idea of the Sacred*, which Lewis drew upon for ‘the experience of the *numinous*’ (Lewis, 1977b, p14) in his 1940 work *The Problem of Pain* and ‘Is Theism Important?’ (1952). The numinous is otherworldly and an experience composed of awe, fascination and the uncanny. The numinous is hard to conceptualise or analyse but operates upon the imagination. Lewis believed that he had an early encounter with the numinous when he read George MacDonald’s *Phantastes*. In *Experiment in Criticism* Lewis proposed that ‘The experience (of myth) is not only grave but awe-inspiring. We feel it to be

numinous' (Lewis, 1996b, p44). Aslan conveys the numinous in Narnia, and the experience also emerges in various Narnian chronicles, for example, in the culminating journey of *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*. Otto characterised the *numinous* as evoking feelings of awe and 'otherness'.

Like Otto, Cassirer fundamentally identified myth with the sacred but realised that because of its 'twofold character' (Cassirer, 1955, p78) the sacred not only differentiates itself from the profane but also 'progressively *permeates* it' (Cassirer, 1955, p78). A kind of mirroring takes place whereby the sacred imparts 'form to its opposite' (Cassirer, 1955, p78). The sacred and the profane are, for Cassirer, the 'primary division (Cassirer, 1955, p79) within the mythical consciousness. The mythical worldview is conditioned by this division. However, the 'original mythical concept of holiness coincides so little with that of ethical purity that a remarkable opposition, a characteristic tension, can arise between the two' (Cassirer, 1955, p79). In *The Lion* Aslan changes the primal archetypal frozen stasis first encountered by Lucy into the paradisaal realm of movement and colour. Aslan's very presence breaks the Witch's spell, and whilst she is profane, evil and an image of death, Aslan permeates Narnia with spring and life and is the focal point of holiness. For Duriez Aslan

is intended to be a symbol of Christ, Christ not as he appeared and will appear in our world (as a real man), but as he appears in Narnia (as a "real" Narnian talking lion). The symbol of the lion (a traditional image of authority) perhaps owes something to Lewis's friend Charles Williams's novel *The Place of the Lion* (Duriez, 2000, p23).

An archetypal lion appears in both writers' works. However, diverse elements make up Aslan: he is declared to be both 'Lord of the whole wood' (Lewis, 1988b, p74), indicating the old nature god myths, but he is far more than a mere nature god. He is 'King of Beasts ... *the* Lion, the great Lion' (Lewis, 1988b, p75) and thus, as Lindskoog points out, 'He is super-animal' (Lindskoog, 1976, p52). In the Bible, see Revelation 5:5, 'the lion is used as a specific symbol of Christ' (Lindskoog, 1976, p50).

Aslan is also a source of nobility, inculcating the qualities of courage, chivalry and duty in the children. Aslan acknowledges Peter as a 'Prince' (Lewis, 1988b, p119) and the 'first-born ...(who) will be High King over all the rest' (Lewis, 1988b, p119) when he takes his throne at Cair Paravel castle. For Peter's brave act of slaying the wolf Aslan knights him as 'Sir Peter Wolf's-Bane' (Lewis, 1988b, p121). The Narnians

succeed in rescuing Edmund and the Witch then comes to parley with Aslan under a temporary truce. The Narnians and the children all feel great discomfort at the mere sight of the Witch, 'Though it was bright sunshine everyone felt suddenly cold' (Lewis, 1988b, pp. 127-128) and thus her appearance evokes sensation. Aslan and the Witch themselves are outside this reaction being 'quite at their ease' (Lewis, 1988b, p128). This meeting brings together the two great contrasts of the book and another opposition in mythical thought: the faces of the divine and the demonic, 'It was the oddest thing to see those two faces - the golden face and the dead-white face - so close together' (Lewis, 1988b, p128).

The Witch demands Edmund's life because of the Emperor's 'Deep Magic' (Lewis, 1988b, p128) that is recorded on various stones in sacred places across Narnia. Through this question of legality the Witch maintains that 'for every treachery I have a right to a kill' (Lewis, 1988b, p128). She demands 'blood as the Law says' (Lewis, 1988b, p129). Aslan will not work against the Emperor's magic, for to deny the Witch means that 'all Narnia will be over turned and perish in fire and water' (Lewis, 1988b, p129).³¹ Thus, for Edmund's blood, Aslan agrees to submit himself for sacrifice. This involvement of 'blood' exchange is a very ancient kind of mixing. Exchanging the divine for human implies the invoking of a relation between man and God (see Cassirer, 1955, p228). In ancient mythico-religious conceptions 'What originally connects man with the god is a physical bond of common blood' (Cassirer, 1955, p226). Gods were viewed as ancestral to tribes and the blood connection is a 'fundamental intuition' (Cassirer, 1955, p226) extending from animal sacrifice up into advanced religions. It is out of primitive mythico-religious conceptions that Cassirer saw the beginnings of the great religions and Christianity. For Lewis primitive sacrifices of gods are mere echoes of the archetypal event of Christ's sacrifice for mankind.³² Whilst Aslan is sacrificed for one child, Edmund, readers are encouraged to realise Christ's sacrifice for every individual. Later, Edmund's survival plays a key role in the destruction of the Witch because he breaks the talisman of her power, her wand. So in this respect Aslan's sacrifice is both for an individual and, through that individual's actions, for everyone else.

Earlier the Witch had intended to kill Edmund. On that occasion, as when she kills Aslan, she follows the same ritual. The deed is to be carried out on the Stone Table because 'That is where it has always been done before' (Lewis, 1988b, p123). Thus the

Narnians have been involved in ritual sacrifice for a considerable time. Presumably, following Lewis' view of such sacrifices, this may indicate that the Narnian's too have echoes back in time of the greater event of Aslan's sacrifice in this place. Either way, it is a place of death. It is not clear if the act of killing victims on the stone table is something the Witch has always done or that the Narnians themselves undertook before her control of Narnia became absolute. Only after reading *The Magician's Nephew* do we learn that she has in fact been in Narnia since Aslan created it, having found her way into Narnia at that time. The sacrifices carried out on the stone table follow careful ritual. The ritual is composed of certain acts in a special order. First 'The Witch bared her arms as she had bared them the previous night when it had been Edmund instead of Aslan' (Lewis, 1988b, p140). After this she begins to 'whet her knife' (Lewis, 1988b, p140). Although her knife is steel, the light cast upon it reveals that 'It looked ... as if the knife were made of stone, not of steel, and it was of a strange and evil shape' (Lewis, 1988b, p140). The metamorphosis of her knife into a stone one suggests Lewis' attempt to evoke a primordial image. Sacrifice, in Cassirer's view, is a 'religious action' (Cassirer, 1955, p221) and many have viewed it as a 'mediation between the divine and the human' (Cassirer, 1955, p226). Thus sacrifice invokes the relation between these disparate entities. Sacrifice according to ritual is a 'sacramental act' (Cassirer, 1955, p228) and there is an importance placed upon 'all the details and particularities that the ritual prescribes - the slightest deviation and omission therein depriving the sacrifice of its meaning and efficacy' (Cassirer, 1955, p228). Upon Aslan's arrival for the sacrifice he is first bound and then humiliated, his mane is shorn and he is muzzled (see Matthew 27:28-34 and 48). Despite the howling taunts of the Witch and her rabble, Aslan makes no defence. Even after being shorn he looks 'braver, and more beautiful, and more patient than ever' (Lewis, 1988b, p139). He is feared by the Witch and her followers, but she wants him not only to die but also to despair and so tells him she will go on to conquer Narnia and kill Edmund anyway (see Matthew 27:46). One of Cassirer's observations about the 'elementary stages of religious development' (Cassirer, 1955, p222) and sacrifice is that 'the power imputed to the sacrifice is rooted in the self-renunciation of sacrifice' (Cassirer, 1955, p222). A kind of surrender of the self occurs with Aslan's submission to the Witch. This is the kernel of meaning that emerges in the way that Aslan suffers humiliation by the Witch immediately prior to his death at her hands.

Sacrifice can be made to a god or by a god. The meaning, for Cassirer, of sacrifice emerges most fully when a god sacrifices himself, 'Through the suffering and death of the god, through his entrance into physical finite existence in which he is dedicated to death, this existence is raised to the level of the divine and freed from death' (Cassirer, 1955, p230). This motif is 'among the truly elementary mythical-religious ideas of mankind' (Cassirer, 1955, pp. 230-231). However Christianity is distinguished from other religions exploiting this motif because of 'the new, purely spiritual meaning that is gained from it' (Cassirer, 1955, p231), accepting that there remained some traditional mythical conceptions within medieval Christian doctrines. A loss of identity and self occurs not only through man existing for God but also through God existing for man. Thus from primitive conceptions of sacrifice and the physical bridge between man and God there has been a 'progressive spiritualization of the concept of sacrifice' (Cassirer, 1955, p231).

The way that Lewis' presents Aslan's resurrection exploits an ancient opposition. Immediately after Aslan's death it is 'the darkest part of the night' (Lewis, 1988b, p143). However when light returns

the red turned to gold along the line where the sea and the sky met and very slowly up came the edge of the sun. At that moment they heard from behind them a loud noise - a great cracking deafening noise (Lewis, 1988b, p146).

The stone table has cracked, and because of this Aslan is restored through deeper magic from before time dawned.³³ Presumably Lewis means before the dawn of sequential time, back to what Cassirer termed 'mythical "primordial time" (which) gradually turns into "real" time, into a consciousness of sequence' (Cassirer, 1955, p106). The Witch knew of the incantations going

back only to the dawn of time. But if she could have looked a little further back, into the stillness and the darkness before Time dawned, she would have read there a different incantation (Lewis, 1988b, p148).

Cassirer observed that 'usages, customs, social norms, and ties - are ... hallowed by being derived from institutions prevailing in the primordial mythical past' (Cassirer, 1955, p105). However the notion of time that is out of, or beyond, sequential time suggests the Christian concept of eternity in which God dwells and where exist our 'immortal souls' (Lewis, 1977c, p116). In early mythical conceptions the sacrifice of the god was to ensure the progression of cyclic seasonal time, thus maintaining the

natural cycle. Aslan's arrival in Narnia achieves this but he must break the Witch's power to ensure she doesn't return Narnia to endless winter. Aslan's resurrection results in a restoration of the divine life feeling. He is exuberant, roaming and tearing across Narnia with the girls upon his back, like an injection of sacral reality back into the Narnian realm. His roar is so powerful that trees 'bend before the blast' (Lewis, 1988b, p149) and 'his face became so terrible that they did not dare to look at it' (Lewis, 1988b, p149). This recalls Otto's distinction of the '*tremenda majestas* or "aweful majesty"' (Otto, 1958, p20). This sense is combined with terror during the occasion when Aslan roars at the Witch's impudence for doubting he will keep his bargain and she 'fairly ran for her life' (Lewis, 1988b, p131).

Aslan rushes across Narnia's countryside until depositing the children in the courtyard of the Witch's castle. There Aslan's divine breath literally breathes life into the hellish static stone statues, Ford observing that Aslan's reviving breath is 'most assuredly an image of the Holy Spirit' (Ford, 1994, p21). These statues are the Witch's victims and prisoners. The breath of Aslan engulfs the statues as though they are burning paper. A stone lion is revitalised when

a tiny streak of gold began to run along his white marble back - then it spread - then the colour seemed to lick all over him as the flame licks all over a bit of paper - then, while his hindquarters were still obviously stone, the lion shook his mane and all the heavy, stone folds rippled into living hair (Lewis, 1988b, pp. 152-153).

Once Aslan's divinity touches them it induces 'The change' (Lewis, 1988b, p155) that creeps over them in an organic way, restoring everything we associate with life, including movement, colour, jollity, a sense of self and joy (see Lewis, 1988b, pp. 152-156); thus they return to a state more like the 'organic, spiritual unity' (Cassirer, 1955, pxiv) or holism of Cassirer in which 'myth has so crucial a significance' (Cassirer, 1955, pxiv).

Soon life returns to so many that 'Creatures were running after Aslan and dancing round him till he was almost hidden in the crowd' (Lewis, 1988b, p153). Tumnus is restored along with Giant Rumblebuffin who knocks down the castle wall allowing the freed prisoners to descend onto the battleground where Peter and Edmund are already engaging the forces of the Witch. Edmund smashes the Witch's wand and the good Narnians now have the advantage. After the battle Lucy uses her cordial, the

restorative gift she received from Father Christmas, to tend the wounded such as Edmund. After this Edmund becomes not only physically healed but also 'could look you in the face' (Lewis, 1988b, p163). Following this transformation, and for his bravery, Edmund is knighted by Aslan. This continues the heraldic³⁴ romantic motifs that culminate in the change in the children's speech into 'the elevated language of medieval romance' (Manlove, 1993, p34).

It is a central premise of Cassirer that 'Myth lives entirely by the presence of its object - by the intensity with which it seizes and takes possession of consciousness in a specific moment' (Cassirer, 1955, p35). Lewis commented upon the notion of myth as an object of contemplation, something that exudes a power by its very holistic nature. Considering myth as stories or tales, there is for Lewis a consciousness that rises above sequential story events.³⁵ Whilst *The Lion* is a story, a tale, the notion of changing our consciousness to a mythical one is achieved in various ways as Cassirer's phenomenology of myth helps us appreciate. This point is ultimately made in *The Lion* by revealing that sequential time is transcended. The entirety of the Pevensie children's adventure in Narnia takes no time at all in Earthly sequential time. Their life in Narnia only changes them spiritually since, on their return through the wardrobe, they emerge as children once more and find themselves back in 'the same day and the same hour of the day on which they had all gone into the wardrobe to hide' (Lewis, 1988b, p170).

The children thus experience two lives, that which occurs in the realm of Narnia, where the Witch is fought and they become kings and queens and grow to maturity, and that which occurs on Earth. It is as adults in Narnia, long after their struggles with the Witch, that they rediscover the lamp-post whilst out hunting the white stag. Edmund then says that 'It runs in my mind that I have seen the like before; as it were in a dream, or in the dream of a dream' (Lewis, 1988b, pp. 168-169). The others feel the same and, investigating further, soon find themselves back through the wardrobe and returned to being children.³⁶ The way that the children's past lives are blurred as though remembered through the 'dream of a dream' recalls Cassirer's view that in mythical consciousness boundaries are blurred (see Cassirer, 1955, p36), the world of Earth has become myth to the children who have grown up in Narnia and thus objective reality is in flux between the two worlds. By going into Narnia, where myth is fact, and fulfilling a prophetic myth the children have become part of myth and thus they have assumed a mythical reality themselves. Ordinarily the mythical experience 'hovers' between 'the

world of dream and the world of objective reality' (Cassirer, 1955, p36) but, at the close of *The Lion*, the children remember their past lives as only the 'dream of a dream'. Considering the divide between dream and reality, sleeping and waking, death and life, Cassirer proposed a relation of a more homogeneous kind and viewed each in mythical thought as 'parts of the same being' (Cassirer, 1955, p37). The 'dream of a dream' is a further removal from the children's Narnian reality. Thus their lives on Earth are even further estranged, compared to the reality of the experience of their lives whilst on the Narnian side of the wardrobe. The idea that life is a dream and that awaking from it implies emerging into greater reality, suggests a Platonist conceit whereby lives on Earth or in Narnia are equally merely dreams compared to the waking reality of God.

Footnotes

- ¹ In 'Is Theology Poetry?' (1945) Lewis wrote that 'The earliest stratum of the Old Testament contains many truths in a form which I take to be legendary, or even mythical' (Lewis, 2000, p16). In *Miracles* (1947) Lewis states that 'Myth in general is ... at its best, a real though unfocussed gleam of divine truth falling on human imagination' (Lewis, 1974, p138). In 'Is Theism Important?' (1952) Lewis wrote that 'a Pagan ... is a man eminently convertible to Christianity. He is essentially, the pre-Christian, or sub-Christian, religious man' (Lewis, 2000, p54).
- ² See Lewis' essays 'Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's To Be Said' (1956); and 'It All Began With A Picture' (1960); and 'Unreal Estates' (1965). Lewis said that all three books of his space trilogy began with pictures (see Lewis, 2000, p529 and p531).
- ³ See Moorman, C., (1960) *Arthurian Triptych: Mythic Materials in Charles Williams, C.S. Lewis and T.S. Eliot*, University of California Press, p19 and *passim*.
- ⁴ In 'Myth Became Fact' (1944) Lewis maintains that great myth can impart truths, allowing us to experience 'as a concrete what can otherwise be understood only as an abstraction' (Lewis, 1979a, p42). See also *Experiment in Criticism* (1961). Also for *The Lion* Lewis used the Form of fairy tale which meant that his art was constrained having 'very little in the way of speculation, thought, contemplation' (Manlove, 1993, p28). In a letter dated 2nd December 1962 Lewis wrote that 'Writing "juveniles" certainly modified my habits of composition ... (it) Cut down reflective and analytical passages' (Lewis, 1993, p506). The reduction of these things brings to the fore the sense of immediacy deemed essential to myth's function by Cassirer (see Cassirer, 1955, p35).

⁵ Lewis used the parable from George MacDonald of a person ‘as a living house’ (Lewis, 1977d, p172). God soon takes over and begins rebuilding the property around the hapless occupant ready to move in and take up residence. The old professor explains to Peter and Susan that ‘this is a very strange house, and even I know very little about it’ (Lewis, 1988b, p48). Moreover, the professor’s old house is not only strange but ‘all manner of stories were told about it, some of them even stranger than the one I am telling you now’ (Lewis, 1988b, p51). Thus Lewis evokes the myth and mystery of old unexplored houses. Wesley Kort points out that ‘A house has, for the child, unexplored and even frightening parts, but it is no less enticing and desirable for that’ (Kort, 2001, p61). Living in a house is analogous to living in the world, ‘To live in the world as if in a house is to feel related to it, to be excited and intrigued by it, to be both intimidated and supported, surprised and illumined by it, grateful and responsible for it. Feelings of what Rudolf Otto called the numinous, the feeling of the uncanny, can also occur in the house’ (Kort, 2001, p61). See Lewis, 1977b, pp. 14-20 and Otto, R., (1958) *The Idea of the Holy*, trans. Harvey, J.W., New York: Oxford University Press. See also Kort, W.A., (2001) *C.S. Lewis, Then and Now*, Oxford, Chapter 3 ‘Houses’.

⁶ For example, Virgil’s *Aeneid* (6:179, 185-88); and Dante Alighieri *Convivio* (4:24:12), and *The Divine Comedy, Inferno* Canto (1:1-9); and Spenser *The Faerie Queene* Book I, Canto I, Stanza 13, line 6. The darkness of such allegorical woods can indicate ‘ignorance and sin’ (Benvenuto in Singleton, 1989, p5).

⁷ See Cassirer, 1955, pp. 74-75 and p78.

⁸ Colin Manlove notes that Lucy comes ‘from *lux* meaning “light” or “perception”’ (Manlove, 1993, p32).

⁹ See Cassirer, 1955, pp. 98-99 and Lewis, 1996c, p71. Lewis wrote that ‘God is, or is like, light... for every devotional, philosophical, and theological purpose imaginable within a Christian, or indeed a monotheistic, frame of reference’

(Lewis, 1996c, p71). Lewis read about this notion in Bevan, E., (1938) *Symbolism and Belief*, London, pp. 125-50.

¹⁰ See 'On Stories' (1947) and 'On Myth' in *Experiment in Criticism* (1961).

¹¹ Lewis, 1996b, p43.

¹² The apparent anomaly of Father Christmas has been commented upon by Green and Hooper in *C.S. Lewis*, p241; Peter Schakel *Reading With the Heart*, p140 n.24; and Donald E. Glover, *C.S. Lewis*, p241. However Manlove maintains that Father Christmas is 'not the anomaly he has sometimes been seen' (Manlove, 1993, p36). See also Wilson *C.S. Lewis*, p241. For Ford 'Father Christmas is a hieroglyph of the joy that Aslan brings' (Ford, 1994, p182). See also Doris E. Myers (April 1984) 'The Complete Anglican: Spiritual Style in the *Chronicles of Narnia*' in *Anglican Theological Review*, 66:2, p150; and Sayer, 1997, pp. 312-313, in which Sayer explains Tolkien's dislike of the inclusion of Father Christmas in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. In 'Always Winter and Never Christmas, Symbols of Time in Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia*' (1991) *Mythlore* No. 67, Vol. 18, No. 1, Nancy Lou Patterson identifies the mythical figure of Father Christmas with Lewis' time symbolism and observes the tension that emerges between this pagan figure and Christianity.

¹³ Nancy Lou Patterson has noted a correspondence between *Tumnus* and *Vertumnus*, Tumnus being the diminutive of the Latin word for the transforming Roman sylvan divinity (see Patterson, *Mythlore* 27). Ovid's Vertumnus (see *Metamorphoses* Bk. XIV) is the god of seasons who seeks to deceive Pomona. Tumnus also seeks to deceive Lucy and betray her to the White Witch but he relents and lets her go. His description of the white stag hunt suggests a kind of seasonal affiliation. Pomona is pursued for her beauty by satyrs and Priapus, amongst others, but eventually acquiesces to Vertumnus when he discards his disguise as an old woman. The elements of Vertumnus' seasonal time quality, the ripening of fruit and the chase for a mate, suggest the myth's overtones of sexual maturation.

- ¹⁴ In *Prince Caspian* (1951) Peter recalls his former life in Narnia (which began in *The Lion*) and upon discovering an overgrown orchard in the ruins of Cair Paravel he recalls that ‘The greatest of all the wood-people, Pomona herself, came to put good spells on it’ (Lewis, 1990a, p24).
- ¹⁵ See Lewis’ letter dated 2nd December 1962, in which he said that ‘Writing “juveniles”’ (Lewis, 1993, p506) changed his usual approach to ‘composition ... (it) Excluded erotic love’ (Lewis, 1993, p506).
- ¹⁶ The ‘principle of *pars pro toto*’ (Schultz, 2000, p59), which Cassirer notes in *PSF* II, p111, sees a symbol ‘confused with the whole to which it belongs’ (Schultz, 2000, p59).
- ¹⁷ The ‘turning’ of Tumnus may recall Turnus in Virgil’s *Aeneid*.
- ¹⁸ Langer notes that ‘The very word “imagination” denotes a process of image-making. An image is only an aspect of the actual thing it represents’ (Langer, 1949, p386).
- ¹⁹ The unifying of the mythical world occurs through Cassirer’s ‘rule of concrescence’ (Cassirer, 1955, p111) in the members of a relation in mythical thought, and pre-consciously through what Cassirer called “fusion”. Objects are related by their ‘expressive qualities’ (Schultz, 2000, p170) and the law of fusion is ‘present in the transfer of the essence from object to object - the wearing of a lion’s fur could invest the wearer with the essence’ (Schultz, 2000, p171). The children’s wearing of the fur coats could have this kind of connotation, especially since they will encounter the concrete reality of Aslan and find themselves in his service.
- ²⁰ Cassirer, 1955, p69.
- ²¹ The children encounter Bacchus and Silenus in *Prince Caspian* (1951), see Chapter 11 and Chapter 14.

- 22 For Cassirer it is a 'primordial force of the mythical imagination' (Cassirer, 1955, p201) that from the often 'indeterminate and intangible' (Cassirer, 1955, p201) impressions upon primitive man 'In the rustling of the leaves, the murmuring and roaring of the wind, and the play and sparkle of the sunlight, in a thousand indefinable voices and tones the life of the forest first becomes perceptible to the mythical consciousness as the immediate manifestation of the innumerable elemental spirits who inhabit the woods: the woodsprites and elves, the spirits of tree and wind' (Cassirer, 1955, p201). This is the objectivisation of such impressions and a phase leading into the delineation of the 'I'. In Lewis' fairy tale *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, these impressions are concrete realities in Narnia, thus the children encounter real elves, dwarfs, fauns etc. This apparent return to a pagan worldview by a Christian apologist becomes more comprehensible when we consider Lewis' comments in 'Is Theism Important?' (1952) in which he views pagan man as the forerunner to the fully Christian man because he had the religious feeling from which one can build from the moral ambiguity of the category of the Numinous into the Holy, moral experience and finally into Faith which emerges from all of the previous categories combined (see Lewis, 2000, p54 and pp. 56-57).
- 23 There are exceptions however such as the Witch and the old professor who know the reality of both worlds.
- 24 For further discussion of Lilith see Graves, R., and Raphael, P., (1964) *The Hebrew Myths: The Book of Genesis*, Garden City: Doubleday; and see also Colonna, M.T., (October 1980) 'Lilith, or the Black Moon' in *Journal of Analytical Psychology*: pp. 325-50; and Corelli, M., (1892) *The Soul of Lilith*, New York: Lovell, Coryell & Co. It is worth noting that for Lewis Hebrew mythology 'was the chosen mythology - the mythology chosen by God to be the vehicle of the earliest sacred truths' (Lewis, 1974, p138).
- 25 The Witch's passing herself off as human and a queen recalls Spenser's creation of Duessa in *The Faerie Queene* Book I. It also suggests that in Narnia's hierarchy humans are above talking animals and mythical beings such as dryads, naiads, unicorns and centaurs.

- ²⁶ Mana is a term that has undergone subtle changes according to its usage by Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss, Robert Codrington, et al., it became increasingly difficult to define with ‘the extension of the mana concept’ (Cassirer, 1955, p76). However, broadly speaking, mana means spiritual or supernatural power, (see Cassirer, 1955, p76). It has been suggested as a concept applicable to an era before the ‘highly developed concept of the soul or the personality, or at least where there is no clear dividing line between physical and psychic, spiritual-personal and impersonal reality’ (Cassirer, 1955, pp. 76-7). The White Witch is an image of death, her actions result in death and stasis, and negation of the I. It is hard to believe she has a soul but she is more like death embodied or personified into a distillation of evil. All sense of life is certainly extinguished in her.
- ²⁷ Cassirer, 1955, pp. 189-188.
- ²⁸ Cassirer’s assessment of myth rejects as unbalanced ‘the animistic theory which attempts to derive the whole content of myth’ (Cassirer, 1955, p36) from the importance of ‘dream experience’ (Cassirer, 1955, p36) in the emergence of mythical consciousness. Tylor sought to explain myth solely in terms of a ‘confusion and mixture of dream experience and waking experience’ (Cassirer, 1955, p36). Despite this Cassirer maintains that ‘there can be no doubt that the characteristic structure of certain basic mythical concepts is intelligible only if we consider that for mythical thinking and mythical “experience” there is always a hovering between the world of dream and the world of objective reality’ (Cassirer, 1955, p36).
- ²⁹ Lewis wrote that Aslan ‘pulled the whole story together, and soon He pulled the six other Narnian stories in after him’ (Lewis, 2000, p529).
- ³⁰ Duriez identifies that Aslan is ‘Turkish for “lion”’ (Duriez, 2000, p23).
- ³¹ This recalls Biblical purification (see Numbers 31:23).

- ³² Thus in 'The Grand Miracle' (1945) Lewis concludes that 'He (Christ) is here of whom the corn king was an image' (Lewis, 1971, p59).
- ³³ See I Corinthians 2:5-8.
- ³⁴ Ford notes that 'Aslan is first seen ... in a heraldic setting, a tableau of mythological creatures seated in a half-circle around the splendid lion' (Ford, 1994, pp. 19-20). Among the group are various 'symbols of Christ' (Ford, 1994, p20).
- ³⁵ See Lewis, C.S., 'On Stories' (1947).
- ³⁶ Although occasionally returned to Narnia, for example in *Prince Caspian*, the children continue to live their lives on Earth until Peter, Edmund and Lucy die in a train accident in the final Chronicle *The Last Battle* (1956) whereupon they discover another country, a new Narnia, existing in a greater sacral reality.

Conclusion

This thesis has revealed several new approaches to the study of myth in literature. It can be used by Lewis scholars to distinguish new meaning, through the readings applied to three test cases; and it can yield new insight for those interested in the philosophy of Cassirer by considering practical examples, albeit filtered through the medium of literature, of Cassirer's myth principles. However, fundamentally the study pioneers new reading strategies for mythopoeic fantasy works. The need for a new approach emerged in my introductory discussion of myth because the tracing of mythic structures in narratives requires a re-definition of normative reading strategies. In many ways myth transcends narrative and Lewis himself recognised that myth emerges in a host of other guises. My approach tries to accommodate the fact that myth functions in a variety of different ways, sometimes not even through words as such but in an object, an image or a worldview.

The introductory review of myth theoretics reveals that a broad contrast of approaches emerges. For example, we observed that in contrast to the sacral, holistic mentality and approach to myth there is also the reductionism of allegory, structuralism, Freudianism and euhemerism. In fact, the current state of myth theory is so eclectic that it is almost impossible to relate certain theories that take for their common ground the field of myth studies. Thus, it becomes increasingly hard to reconcile that the same mythology fuels the discussions of both Jane Harrison, who sees theology as mythology (see Harrison, 1980, pvii), and Marina Warner, who contrasts Greek hero myths with modern cultural myths. The Schwarzenegger paradigm cited by Warner is hardly a believed myth in the way that heroes were revered and deified by the ancient Greeks. A substantial gulf also exists between Barthes' notion of myth as ideology and the Inklings' sacramental approach to myth. A growing sense of disparity occurs between the various myth theories because of cultural diversity, changes in movements, thought and analytical approaches. The views and definitions of myth have become widely divergent. However, in contrast to many popular approaches, this thesis explores a more holistic, transcendent notion of myth, observing the arguments of Lewis' and the

Inklings' in opposition to the reductivity of so many other approaches. Their rejection of reduction explains why Lewis denied that his works were allegorical, and so could be reduced to one meaning. He preferred to call them fairy tales, observing that the form of fairy allowed him to bring in mythical elements and the mythical mode. This sense of the mythical allows Lewis' works to be treated as his myths.

Chapter One charts the development of Lewis' thought on myth, observing several difficulties in the path of analysis of Lewis and myth. Whilst Lewis' early childhood enjoyment of myth progressed from Norse through to other mythologies, he came to develop his knowledge of myth and to subject his emotional enjoyment of myth to self-analysis. He observed in his autobiography that this scrutiny had the reverse effect to that expected, his enjoyment actually diminished as his knowledge grew. He came to religious belief by comprehending a greater reality through myth, the numinous, *Sehnsucht*, inner experience and intellect. He proposed that myth involves divine gleams of celestial reality being filtered to humanity. However, his Christian conversion meant new problems in Lewis' reaction to myth because now he began to subject his imagination to the discipline of intellect with greater rigour in an attempt to receive the myth of Christ with the same appreciation that he obtained so much more easily from, for example, the pagan Norse myths.

These problems become magnified in Lewis' creative works. We can see his struggle with the inherent tensions within myth emerging in his endless search for a form. He was out of step with his era, his rhyming narrative poem *Dymer* was completely at odds with the modernist developments of 1920s poetry. He continued to subject myth to intellectual scrutiny in his capacity as a critic, a literary historian and a proselytising Christian apologist. He wanted to reassert moral values and the kind of chivalry associated with heroic epic poetry. Lewis passed into middle age having abandoned the allegory of *Pilgrim's Regress* in favour of the deeper more mythical symbols and thought explored in his *Cosmic Trilogy*, Narnian Chronicles and pseudo-historical novel, *Till We Have Faces*. He was now striving not only to be a refashioner of myth, but also a mythmaker. However, he had to cope with tensions within the mythical materials themselves, the conflict between what he saw as the gleams of higher religious reality emerging through myth and the view of myth as simply lies. He rejected evolutionist myths, myths of the modern outlook and myths of the populist science of Wells' fictions. It is an inconsistency in Lewis' thought that whilst he

recognised the 'primitive or instinctive mind' (Lewis, 1958, p312), he rejected evolutionary change in man, 'the modern conception of Progress or Evolution (as popularly imagined) is simply a myth, supported by no evidence whatever' (Lewis, 2000, p46; see 'The World's Last Night'). However, in contrast, Lewis maintained that 'the doctrine of the second coming ... is not to be rejected because it conflicts with our favourite modern mythology' (Lewis, 2000, p49). Upon taking the professorship at Cambridge he acknowledged his own myth of feeling himself to be a relic from a past era, (see '*De Descriptione Temporum*'). He chiefly used the modern world as a plane of reality from which, in line with his theory of transposition, signs emerge of religious truth and of the greater reality of God. Nature itself can be viewed as 'the bearer of messages' (Lewis, 1977f, p71) from God who is the creator of Nature and man both. Lewis was at odds with the reality into which he found himself born. He saw it as a world of division and he also felt divided within himself, feeling torn between his material, rational self and his imaginative, creative side. This sense of both inner and outer division extends, for Lewis, to myth and history, and to language and myth, and in the paradox of Lewis' view that Christ's story is simultaneously both fact and myth. Whilst Lewis felt a sense of disunity, it is a key point that Barfield and Cassirer saw the mentalities of ancient man as exhibiting a more unified, imagistic type of thought. They proposed that ancient man's more imagistic thinking allowed people to experience things more 'concretely' than the general thought processes of modern man because modern thought has become increasingly abstract. Lewis championed the theory of myth and language espoused by Barfield in *Poetic Diction*, and Lewis' fictions exploring myth reveal Barfield's 'ancient unities', as well as mythical thought, mythical worlds and more unified realms in which the mythical is a concrete reality and where myth evokes a realm from which man can draw religious sustenance (particularly in the alien worlds of *The Cosmic Trilogy*). Cassirer, Barfield and Lewis recognised that the further back we look the more deeply mythical the mentality. Cassirer's 1924 conception of 'concrete unity ... with myth' (Cassirer, 1955, pxiv) pre-empted Barfield's 1927 notion of ancient unities. For Lewis the notion of ancient unity explains certain 'states of consciousness which we ourselves still from time to time experience' (Lewis, 1974, p82).

Despite their differences of approach and purpose, both Lewis and Cassirer are thinkers who share a remarkable common ground in myth. For Cassirer primitive man

comes to religious understanding gradually through a process of objectivising the elemental forces of nature and seeing gods in events such as thunder and occurrences of nature. Thus, for Cassirer, consciousness gradually develops from the undifferentiated mythical consciousness into the delineation of self and the concept of the 'I' and the 'Thou' or 'Divine'. Cassirer proposed that

The mythical consciousness resembles a code which is intelligible only to those who possess the key to it - i.e. for whom the particular contents of this consciousness are merely conventional signs for something "other," which is not contained in them (Cassirer, 1955, p38).

In *Surprised by Joy* Lewis commented that he experienced Joy and longing from myth, desiring myth and initially viewing this desire as simply the craving for aesthetic experience. However he came to conclude that the object of Joy was 'something other, outside' (Lewis, 1977e, p176) and 'sheerly objective' (Lewis, 1977e, p177) and almost beyond his power to supply with an image. In Cassirer's view of the formation of 'the first mythological images' (Cassirer, 1955, p200) which are assumed by Cassirer to have emerged from the impression made on primitive man by 'natural objects and forces' (Cassirer, 1955, p200), including such things as the 'rustling of the leaves' (Cassirer, 1955, p201) and the 'voices' of nature and life around man (see Cassirer, 1955, p201), their action upon mythical consciousness and the action of man's feelings and emotions upon the images supplied by the objective world can be viewed as an 'advanced process of objectivization' (Cassirer, 1955, p200). For Lewis, of course, the emergence of man from viewing 'natural objects ... (as) themselves Divine' (Lewis, 1977f, p70) means their re-evaluation as Divine symbols and the realisation of God's hand as creator in the objects and world that He created, which is a view all too 'close to Paganism' (Lewis, 1977f, p70). However there is a tremendous difference in 'hearing in the thunder the voice of God or the voice of a god' (Lewis, 1977f, p70).

Cassirer wanted to present the phenomena of myth as it appears to consciousness and here again a convergence of purpose emerges since Lewis also studied myth's 'characteristics' (Lewis, 1996b, p43) and claimed to be 'describing not accounting for myths' (Lewis, 1996b, p44) in *Experiment in Criticism*. However Lewis was far more immersed in myth than Cassirer, although both recognised the power of myth as fundamentally experiential. The experience of myth rises beyond attempts to intellectualise it, it is the expression of emotion, and adds to life (see Lewis, 2000, p528;

Cassirer, 1985, p71). For Lewis signs of the greater pattern of existence, the deterministic qualities of nature in which man is a part, suggest the dualistic state of man as an ephemeral animal whose soul remains eternal. Thus nature and the life feeling and archetypal mythical images transform through mythical thought the dull, dead and flat existence of the profane world, into the vibrant colour and larger patterns associated with life, the spirit and the sacred. Mythical thought provides the permeation and reforming of the profane according to the form of the sacred. Whilst mythical images are characterised by the sense of the holy, it is not the purer Holiness associated with the higher form of ethical-religious consciousness.

In Chapter Two we observed that both Lewis and Cassirer recognised myth as an active power or attribute of man. Cassirer and Barfield developed similar ideas of myth and language in the development of human consciousness. Whilst Cassirer saw that primitive man's unified consciousness fractures over time and becomes divided in modern man (see Ch. 2, p98), when Lewis looked back through time he saw instead of human progression God communicating religious truth to man through myth and prophetic images of the divine and archetypal event of Christ's Incarnation. Thus Lewis overcomes the tension between pagan and Christian myth, and views ancient myth of dying and reviving gods as reflecting back into time the archetypal event of Christ's Death and Resurrection. The many different approaches toward myth each address certain aspects of myth but something remains unexplained for Lewis, this something being God's supernatural reality which myth hints at or allows us to in some way come closer to knowing. For Cassirer the holism of the combination of spirit, emotion and sensual feeling help to compose myth, and myth emerges through every aspect of man contributing to building the mythical image. Both Lewis and Cassirer considered myth as it is manifested in consciousness (see Ch. 2, pp. 107-8), the inner mental faculties adding to the image, giving it a mythical or religious flavour. Lewis maintained that we have to be mythopathic to receive God's mythopoeia (see 'Myth Became Fact'). For Lewis and Cassirer mythical symbols acquire 'value distinctions', which becomes clear when we observe their views on light and darkness being transposed into good and evil. Fear of the dark is allayed by the light, and this is an archetypal opposition or mental structure.

Another tension of myth concerns the way it can be viewed as an irrational force dominating Nazi ideology and propaganda whilst it can also reveal higher sacral truths,

and even sacral reality according to Lewis. The qualities of humanity that respond to myth need to be ethically guided for the myth world to give way to the religious consciousness, and for those within myth to come out of the experience, not into the abstract but into the qualities composing religious experience. Cassirer's *oeuvre* reveals his change from a relatively dispassionate approach to myth in his philosophy of symbolic forms to his work of occasion in *The Myth of the State* which warns of myth's domination of modern man and use as a political weapon. Lewis also recognised that the Nazi appropriation of myth had to be countered, not least because it questioned the very mythology from which Lewis had received so much pleasure and his early intimations of *Sehnsucht*. Lewis vehemently attacked not only the Nazis, but all forms of pernicious myth-making and the turning of pagan myth back into what he denounced as minimal religions.

From Cassirer's phenomenological studies the workings of mythical thought are laid before us. We can appreciate its inner form, consciousness, image world and peculiar causation and observe these things in operation within Lewis' fictions. By using Cassirer's principles to re-examine myth in Lewis' fictions we can see how even causality is replaced by what Cassirer termed the inner form of myth, as though by putting on the fur coats in the Wardrobe, the children take on the skin of the mythical, or, as we observe in *Till We Have Faces*, mythical causality is realised as a demonic force in Glome or is personified in the White Witch's control over Narnia.

There is a primal quality involved in Cassirer's view of mythical consciousness and *Perelandra* evokes a primal vision of original innocence in the Green Lady. Mythical consciousness also has affinities with the primitive and the child-like and the Green Lady exhibits a primally child-like mentality. Myth informs not only the pattern of the *Perelandra* story, drawing upon the Eden myth, but also evokes mythic experience and a myth world that has a quality beyond the merely successive nature of plot sequence. Various elements impart the mythological, and the real theme or idea is more like a state (see 'On Stories').

Perelandra is a world where consciousness has not been differentiated, (Ch. 3, p137). Myth is concrete on *Perelandra*, not divided from truth, and both myth and truth from fact, as Ransom realises that they have become on Earth. Ransom's experience of *Perelandra* is thus that of an Earthman from a Fallen, divided world, confronted by the concrete of myth. Initially he experiences sensory overload because on *Perelandra*

seeing is also feeling for Ransom. He becomes mythopathic and a receptor to the myth he feels himself to be 'enacting'. However he is ultimately not enacting but acting to bring about a change to the conclusion he initially assumes to be inevitable. Since man suffered a Fall on Earth in the myth of Eden, Ransom feels himself to be replaying that myth. His experiences become simultaneously sacral and sensual (Ch. 3, p140). The environment of Perelandra has a biological life quality and there is a fusion of man with environment. Lewis describes a semi-dream state that helps Ransom lose differentiation and which aligns Ransom's thought with the more undifferentiated unity of mythical consciousness (Ch. 3, p146).

The form of life is impressed upon things by mythical consciousness and Ransom's environment has a life-feeling as a result of its tutelary spirit, the Archon Perelandra. Ransom is returned to a state of infancy after his struggle with the Unman. The world provides the convalescent Ransom with a womb-like or nursery sense of protection and succour (Ch. 3, p143). Myth is a symbolic form and thus an 'organ' of reality for both Cassirer and Lewis and its function in *Perelandra* affirms this. A mythical worldview threatens to engulf Ransom during his encounter with the Mermen which is brought about by his tasting of their food. In mythical thought, spiritual and mythical attributes are often tied to a material substratum, such as the Mermens' food, Ungit's stone or the Witch's turkish delight. The operation and use of images emerges as a special theme in *Perelandra*, and Lewis explores this theme in a way that exhibits remarkable parallels with Cassirer's notions of image and mythical consciousness. The images shown to the Green Lady affect her sense of self, and evoke the same kind of momentary gods in her consciousness that Cassirer noted from the work of Usener and Spieth (see Cassirer, 1953b, pp. 33-34).

Cassirer's myth principles also emerge in *Till We Have Faces*, in which the people of Glome have a mythical worldview. Apuleius' tale was considered to be too allegorical for Lewis and he tried to return to what he considered to be 'original' myth for his own retelling. A curious relationship develops in *Till We Have Faces* in the way Lewis fictionally accounts for the formation of events into a myth (as related by the priest of Essur). Lewis' retelling explores a mythical thought orientated society. The way that the Glomians attempt to provide mythical explanations of their world forms an example of Cassirer's principle of mythical causality (*PSF* II, p45). Through observing mythical causation in Lewis' novel, networks of mythical relations are revealed.

Through mythical causation the people turn on Psyche and she is taken for sacrifice. Psyche's sacrifice is a rite recalling Cassirer's view of 'purification and atonement' (Cassirer, 1955, p56). Thus, in order to lift the taint from the tribe of Glome, she must die. The taint on the tribe can be transferred, according to mythical thinking, to an individual.

Identifying these Cassirean principles in the novel reveals the symbolic form of myth. The nature of the gods, their ability to merge with each other or manifest themselves simultaneously in different objects, is a characteristic that depends upon mythical thought for its operation, (Ch. 4, p176). The Glomians' view of their world is organised according to what is sacred and profane. Ungit is an ugly stone deity that 'pushed' her way up from the earth and this conforms to Cassirer's view of primitive man worshipping marvels and unusual manifestations of nature. Ungit's emergence from the earth recalls notions of the Earth Mother, and the earth as the womb of life (see Lewis, 1978b, p281). The life giving, generative, power links man, gods and nature. The rationalism of the Fox is shown to falter when confronted by the mysticism of the old priest of Ungit. The rite of the Year's birth is a mythical symbol that involves the action of the priest breaking free of the temple/womb of Ungit. This rite maintains assurance of the Glomian worldview. It is thus that the Year is born from Ungit's womb. However this is not a mere symbol to those involved who genuinely believe in their mythical worldview. Similarly, the Glomians' feelings are transposed to objects, such as happens when a lion's shadow is believed to be the Brute that is the wrath of Ungit.

Through the relations of mythical thinking we can see that the curse of Ungit is visited upon Trom. Ungit appears to Orual's father because Orual wears a veil that covers her human features and gives her the appearance and power of a mythical image (see Ch. 4, p188). In fact Ungit becomes related to other things in an unlimited number of ways and this recalls Cassirer's view of the mythical relations evoked by a mythical symbol (see Ch. 4, p190). In the case of Orual's identification with Ungit, this recalls Cassirer's notion of mythical concrescence. Mythical thought thus structures and pervades the novel, linking things, people, gods, life, and love. The four tasks undertaken by Psyche to regain divine favour are en-burdened upon Orual. From Cassirer we can observe the mythical aura resting upon the number four and appreciate each task as a mythical action. All the visions and tasks are part of a process to give Orual self-knowledge and to unite her to the Divine Nature. Finally, the image world of

myth is destroyed by the spiritual-ethical relation Orual attains to the Divine and through recognising images as mythical and exchanging the mythical worldview for a new religious characterisation. Myth becomes a force that in many ways blinkers man in *Till We Have Faces* but eventually, as in each of the works considered, there is a sense of emerging from the wholly mythical world into the new perspective of pure religious consciousness. This is the fundamental purpose of Lewis' fantasy works, to provide readers with the same aesthetic power and imaginative engagement that they might acquire from pagan myth, and to then leave them with an expression of Christian myth.

In the example of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Narnia evokes an image world born in Lewis' imagination. However an image suggests an aspect or representation, and there must also then be the 'actual' thing that the image merely represents (see Langer, 1949, p386). As Lucy discovers Narnia we feel ourselves moving into the imagination of C.S. Lewis and we encounter a world structured by myth. The medium of children's fantasy works appeals to the less abstracted thinking of children. The world of Narnia is introduced to Lucy and the reader in a sensual way. The appearance of the faun evokes a mythical image and there is perhaps an unintentional suggestion that Lucy's sensuality becomes ascribed into the form of Tumnus. The faun in a wooded scene came to Lewis as an image, and he wove it into the story of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. The image of the lion, along with the other images in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, is given a sequential 'life' within Lewis' fairy tale. Aslan's holiness permeates Narnia and changes the profane realm of ice into a sacral paradise. Narnia is a battleground over which various forces are manifested as deities. The Witch has interrupted the natural cycle and is a demonic force in opposition to the divine will. The Witch causes stasis, deadness, and coldness. These qualities emerge in the experiences of Edmund and in the example of the coldness felt by the other children at the sight of the Witch. In contrast, the infusion of Aslan's holiness re-introduces colour, movement, life, self and joy. On being released from stone her victims begin 'dancing round him (Aslan)' (Lewis, 1988, p153). For Cassirer orgiastic dances such as the revelry associated with the Maenads and Bacchus (whose visits to Narnia are recounted by Tumnus) intensify the life feeling in man, breaking down the barrier between man and nature and life's original source. Cassirer's principle of mythical causality reveals Narnia to be a spiritual whole (Ch. 4, pp. 210-211). On Aslan's resurrection he breathes life into the stone victims of the Witch. This

incident recalls Barfield's view of the word *spiritus* combining such translated meanings as spirit, breath, wind. The life-giving breath of Aslan also recalls Cassirer's view of myth worlds having an organic and spiritual unity.

The snow, ice and stasis of the Witch introduces a profane time for Mr Beaver, but he and the children can take heart from the way that the mention of Aslan's name has an affect on people that is both mythical and religious. As the children journey through Narnia their sense of self changes. They become more mythical and eventually become myth themselves when they fulfil the prophecy of assuming the thrones of Narnia. The children's movement through Narnia evokes a dream state and Cassirer identifies that it is a characteristic of myth that dream suggests the blurring of the real. Mythical thought is characterised by the opposition of the sacred and profane and Lewis brings these together as mythical images during the encounter between Aslan and the Witch. The exchange of Aslan for Edmund's blood invokes an ancient mythico-religious conception in which the bond of blood sacrifice is viewed as uniting man and the divine. The sacrifice and killing of Aslan is what Cassirer would call a 'religious action' (*PSF* II, p221) and sacrifice evokes a relation between man and divinity. Aslan's humiliation by the Witch is a surrender of self. His death is a realisation of his 'entrance into finite existence' (Cassirer, 1955, p230), a kind of culmination of meaning that God has become lion. Finally, objective reality is seen to be in flux between Narnia and Earth at the close of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, when the children have grown up in Narnia and become part of the myth world which to them has become reality whilst their lives on Earth are now the dream.

However, there is something less satisfying about Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* myth than there is in the other test examples. This dissatisfaction can be attributed to the mythopoeic art of the tale. Lewis complained about Apuleius' version of the Cupid and Psyche myth, and the paring of the tale down to all too human motives such as jealousy. Characters' motives are unambiguously displayed by Apuleius and this results in the loss of a certain mythical quality. Despite Lewis' recognition of this kind of criticism of Apuleius' myth, a certain simplicity also encroaches upon the myth of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. It is difficult not to read Aslan's death and resurrection as more than a simply allegory of the story of Christ, despite the differences between Aslan and the Christian story and despite Lewis' assertion that Aslan is not allegorical but an imagining of what might happen if God

appeared on another world. However, where the story does succeed is in making Aslan's death emotionally moving, evoking feelings that many found harder to experience when contemplating the Death of Christ (see Lewis' letter to Greeves of 18th October 1931).

The myth studies of Cassirer, and Cassirer's broad definition of myth, have affinities with Lewis' writings on myth since Lewis also developed very wide-ranging views of myth. Schultz points out the broadness of Cassirer's definition of myth (see Schultz, 2000, p55), and we can see that it is about more than myth as a tale although it can be a story. It also includes dream, intuitions, actions and the way these are brought together in mind in order to produce a worldview. From Lewis' definition in *Experiment in Criticism*, myth can be more like a thing than a narration, it can be imparted through a painting, an image, a feeling or consciousness that is beyond narrative (see also 'On Stories'). In Lewis' view, words are not as important for myth as the sequence of events yet he also recognised the real theme as beyond plot. Myth affected Lewis' consciousness (see Lewis' Preface to *George MacDonald an Anthology*) and is akin to music and can be 'tasted'. Cassirer's philosophy also brings in a holism and sensuality to the content of mythical thought, since for Cassirer myth is an 'emotion turned into an image' (Cassirer, 1974, p43).

The three test cases considered in this thesis demonstrate how these qualities emerge within Lewis' fictional works. It is remarkable that the same features of myth emerge from both a phenomenologist and a Christian apologist. Lewis commented from both sides of the division that he described between experience and abstraction. Thus he was aware of how myth worked not only experientially and intuitively but also from the more abstract perspective of a myth theorist. He must be recognised not merely as a mythographer and mythopoeic writer but also as an inspired theorist of myth. Schultz observes that 'Partially, the validity of Cassirer's arguments results from the approach of his field, since different fields do not try to understand myth as a form of thinking' (Schultz, 2000, p56). Once we appreciate the form of mythical thought within Lewis' works, we rise immediately into the domain of mythical consciousness. The phenomenology of myth becomes the guide to the structures we encounter therein, and the thread that leads us out of this maze towards a new apprehension of how Lewis raises theistic intent to the spiritual-ethical configurations of Christianity.

Glossary

Some general terms concerning myth

Myth

The *O.E.D.* defines myth as generally being a fictional narrative having supernatural characters, actions or events and suggests that myth can embody popular notions of natural or historical phenomena. It is distinct from allegory or legend which retain the implication of a factual nucleus. Alternatively myth can be simply an untrue or popular tale, or a fictitious or imaginary person or object.

mythopoe'ia

(*mith-ə-pē'ə*) *noun* the creation or formation of myths, a mythmaking or poeticising. A term associated with the creating of myths by writers in civilised eras such as MacDonald, Lewis and Tolkien.

Mythopoeic

adjective associated with mythopoeia, productive of myths, the creation of myths, the activity of myth making.

Myth-maker

A creator of myths. In my thesis this term has a more solid character than mythopoeia. It is, for example, the term that Lewis and Cassirer apply to Plato.

mythology

1) The exposition of myths. 2) The symbolical meaning of fictitious stories (*obsolete*). 3) Systems of myths. The *O.E.D.* identifies that the use of mythology to mean a mythical story is rare. Mythology is more generally considered to be a body of myths either relating to a particular person or belonging to the religious tradition of a country or people. For example, there is Greek mythology, Egyptian mythology and also Arthurian mythology. To construct a mythology, or mythologize (*verb*), is to relate a myth or myths. Mythology can also refer to that department of knowledge that deals with myths.

mythog'rapher *noun* a writer or narrator of myths (*O.E.D.*)

C.S. Lewis' evolving definition of myth

Lewis proposed that 'Myth is ... like manna; it is to each man a different dish and to each the dish he needs' (Lewis, 'Shelley, Dryden, and Mr. Eliot'). Thus it becomes clearer how Lewis' own view of myth changed over the course of his life, according to his own needs at various times and through debate (his development is explored in greater detail within the body of the study). The greatest change occurred during Lewis' 20s and 30s. Whilst in his agnostic period he denounced Christianity as mythology. However he later turned to Christianity through myth and perceived the truth that myth can impart. His notion of truth in myth turned to a view of myth as imparting 'divine gleams of celestial strength and reality', and led to his notion of 'tasting' myth. In the *Problem of Pain* Lewis considered, amongst other things, the question of the Fall, and offered an explanation that he considered 'a "myth" in the Socratic sense, a not unlikely tale' (Lewis, 1977b, p61). However whilst myth can be a story Lewis believed it to be much more. Myth evoked longing, a new mode of consciousness and feelings in Lewis. He sought the object of those feelings in God rather than in himself, and in this way he proposed that the myths of dying and reviving gods were God using such imagery as He found in the minds of primitive man in order to hint at the Divine story of Christ's Incarnation, Death and Resurrection. The story of Christ is, paradoxically, simultaneously both myth and fact, according to Lewis. Thus he maintained that we should embrace the mythical aspects of the New Testament Gospel stories as well as recognising them as historical accounts from eye-witnesses of mythical events that actually happened. In contrast, Lewis had little time for man-made myth, other than as an example of the mythical imagination or poeticising faculty supplied to man by God. He particularly denounced the myth of man's evolution into a kind of supreme life form, the kind of thing inspired by Wagner's *Ring* cycle or Keats' *Hyperion*. However he also acknowledged that he still enjoyed both Keats' poetry and the grand tragedy of Wagner's *Ring* cycle whilst he denounced the Nazi appropriation of Norse myth. Norse myth had been a source of inspiration during his childhood but the Nazis suborned it into a minimal religion during their rise to power and World War II.

Ernst Cassirer's terminology for the theoretics of myth

Myth

When Cassirer refers to 'myth' he is talking about the irreducible essence of myth in the Socratic sense. However, despite this sense of essence, Cassirer develops a very broad definition of myth (see Schultz, 2000, pp. 31-32), creating a philosophical definition through observing its phenomenological characteristics. For Cassirer, myth is a symbolic form, it is a worldview, an 'image world' that is within the mind and myth flavours, structures and characterises the type of thinking that Cassirer called mythical thinking. Cassirer observed that myth has an inner form or peculiar kind of logic. Cassirer's definition of myth includes tales, dreams, intuitions, actions, percepts and concepts (see Schultz, 2000, pp. 55-56). All these things help to form a believed worldview and Cassirer stresses the importance of feelings in mythical worldviews. A mythical worldview, in Cassirer's philosophy, is built up from mythical symbols.

Mythical Symbols

Schultz has listed the range of mythical symbols that are considered in Cassirer's philosophy, including 'sensations, dreams, actions, percepts, physical objects, tools, cave drawings, natural phenomena, the human body, any living thing, words and sentences, numbers, forms of social organization, rites, myths, and mythology (systems of myths)' (Schultz, 2000, p56). In addition, a symbol can be composed of, or made into, a unity through many other symbols.

The Form of Myth

Although Cassirer strove to determine an 'inner form' of myth, his unitary form of mythical thought is divided into four sections:

- I Myth as a Form of Thought
- II Myth as a Form of Intuition
- III Myth as a Life Form
- IV The Dialectic of the Mythical Consciousness

Cassirer's discussion of myth is conducted in the theoretical sphere. However he supports his theories with a considerable body of empirical evidence. Thus Cassirer's discussion of myth extends into 'the sphere of mythical intuition' (Cassirer, 1955, pxvi) and he asserts that there is also a 'sphere of mythical immediacy' (Cassirer, 1955, pxvi).

Mythical Consciousness

In Cassirer's view mythical consciousness has an 'immediate and undifferentiated unity' (Cassirer, 1955, pxv) and the basic forms of cultural life emerge from the mythical consciousness (see Cassirer, 1955, pxiv). Mythical Consciousness is a 'primal source' (Cassirer, 1955, pxv). The world of mythical consciousness is 'a world not of "things" and their "attributes" but of mythical potencies and powers, of demons and gods' (Cassirer, 1955, pxvi).

Mythical Thinking

For Cassirer commentator William Schultz, 'Partially, the validity of Cassirer's arguments results from the approach of his field, since different fields do not try to understand myth as a form of thinking' (Schultz, 2000, p56). However, Schultz also observes that

there may be some question about calling the acts of the mythical mind "thinking" and using the same term for the modern mind, Cassirer defines thinking broadly as "the meaningfulness of experience" or what makes every mythical phenomenon mythical (*PSF* III, 120, note 2)' (Schultz, 2000, p162).

In Cassirer's works myth can be discussed as 'a matter more of feeling than thinking' (Schultz, 2000, p162).

Cassirer sought to define categories of mythical thinking, these categories include: 'the category of *quantity*' (Cassirer, 1955, p64); 'the category of *similarity*' (Cassirer, 1955, p67); 'the categories of the *whole and the part* and the *attribute*' (Cassirer, 1955, p67). Schultz observes that the categories that Cassirer explored include space, time, number, the physical object (Schultz, 2000, p132), and mythical causation (Schultz, 2000, p118), the latter being composed of Cause, Thing, and Soul/I (Schultz, 2000, p117).

Mythical Intuition

Cassirer often discusses things in 'the sphere of mythical intuition' (Cassirer, 1955, pxvi). There are opposing ways of viewing things, for example, number can be considered empirically or mythically. The significance changes according to the emphasis, so that the mythical intuition surrounding the number four might suggest things as diverse as the points of the cross or spatial orientation. In contrast number, considered scientifically, does not invest any particular digit with an aura of magic. For more on mythical intuition see Cassirer, 1955, p63.

Appendix One

Critical reaction to myth in C.S. Lewis' writings

Whilst many critical observations on Lewis and myth have been included in Chapter One 'C.S. Lewis' Thought on Myth' and throughout the study, this appendix extends the list in order to comment on other approaches and to identify the main areas of criticism of Lewis and myth.

1948 Marjorie Hope Nicholson *Voyages to the Moon*, Macmillan

Nicholson considered that with *Out of the Silent Planet* Lewis had 'created myth itself, myth woven of desire and aspirations deep-seated in some, at least, of the human race' (Nicholson, 1948, pp. 254-255).

1949 Walsh, C., *Apostle to the Skeptics*, New York

Walsh discusses Lewis' mythopoeia in relation to his apologetics.

1953 Nott, K., *The Emperor's Clothes*, William
Heinemann Ltd.

Lewis, amongst other literary figures, is attacked for his dogmatic theology and anti-science stance. Nott views him as a fundamentalist (see Nott, 1953, p48), and proposes that he hypostatizes reason and promotes notions of hierarchy in the universe.

1959 Hart, D.A., 'C.S. Lewis's Defense of Poesie' doctoral
dissertation, University of Wisconsin

Hart observes that, for Lewis, myth is fundamental to man. Hart notes that literature is reassessed according to Lewis' mythopoeic view. However, Lewis' own stories are considered to be overly burdened with ideas and unnecessarily complex. Spontaneity is lost in Lewis' fictions that over-emphasise myth. Lewis' views on myth and metaphor are considered.

1960	Moorman, C.,	<i>Arthurian Triptych: Mythic Materials in Charles Williams, C.S. Lewis and T.S. Eliot</i> , University of California Press.
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Charles Moorman emphasises medieval elements, particularly Arthurian mythic materials, in his discussion of Lewis and myth. Moorman notes the various, often conflicting, theories of myth and his study draws on Ernst Cassirer's theory that primitive man was imagist. Moorman uses various theorists' ideas on myth and symbol to discuss the Arthurian elements in *That Hideous Strength*. Moorman's analysis is restricted by being published ten years before Lewis' narrative poem 'Launcelot' and 36 years before Cassirer's *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. 4, *The Metaphysics of Symbolic Forms* (1996). However Moorman's key idea is that writers draw upon myth because 'Myth offers the poet a complete and ordered cosmos, an irreducible system of coherent belief upon which he can construct an ordered and meaningful poetry' (Moorman, 1960, p2). It also offers poets 'meaningful and coherent symbolism' (Moorman, 1960, p3).

1960	Reilly, R.J.,	<i>Romantic Religion in the Work of Owen Barfield, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams</i> , doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University
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Reilly interprets *Till We Have Faces* and questions mythological views of Christ, see Appendix entry for Reilly 1971.

1960	Wright, M.E.,	'The Cosmic Kingdom of Myth: A Study in the Myth-Philosophy of Charles Williams, C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien', doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois. Also Wright, M.E., 'The Vision of Cosmic Order in the Oxford Mythmakers' in Huttar, C., (1971) <i>Imagination and the Spirit</i> , Eerdmans; and Kilby, C.S., (1965) <i>The Christian World of C.S. Lewis</i> , Marcham Manor Press.
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Majorie Wright discusses hierarchy and cosmic order in Lewis', Williams' and Tolkien's mythopoeia. Wright explores such things as the numinous, timelessness, unifying symbols and Christianity as 'the great and central historical embodiment of myth' (Wright in Kilby, 1965, p199). Material from ancient myth is brought into a cosmos of Williams' and Lewis' own making and Lewis' Narnia mythology suggests expansion is possible whilst the opposite sense emerges from her reading of *Till We Have Faces*.

1965 Kilby, C.S., *The Christian World of C.S. Lewis*,
Marcham Manor Press

Kilby explores myth in various Lewis' works noting that Lewis wanted *Till We Have Faces* to be regarded as myth (see Kilby, 1965, p57) and that one of its major themes is 'the significance of the great myths of mankind' (Kilby, 1965, p60). For Kilby, Psyche sees 'through to the centricity of myth' (Kilby, 1965, p64). Kilby recognises that the novels of Lewis cannot be understood without understanding Lewis' 'belief concerning myth' (Kilby, 1965, p80). Myth was a deep human need for Lewis because 'great myth contains universal truth' (Kilby, 1965, p80). Myth helps man to make pictures that bring him towards understanding 'the great, sovereign, uncreated, unconditioned Reality at the core of things' (Kilby, 1965, p81). Kilby also has insights about the natural world being the substance for the beginnings of myth (see Kilby, 1965, p145). Sacrifice, rebirth, biblical stories and *Sehnsucht* are also considered in relation to Lewis' views on myth.

1965 Gibb, J., (Ed.) *Light on C.S. Lewis*, Geoffrey Bles

Light on C.S. Lewis is a collection of various essays and reminiscences on Lewis. John Lawler recognises *Till We Have Faces* as myth in the 'sense which Lewis himself defined in his *Experiment in Criticism*' (Lawler, 1965, p81). The essays by Stella Gibbons and Kathleen Rain are also of interest for comment on Lewis and imagination.

1966 Lawler, J., 'On Romanticism in the *Confessio Amantis*' in *Patterns of Love and Courtesy: Essays in Memory of C.S. Lewis*, Lawler, J., (Ed.), London: Edward Arnold.

Lawler maintains that Lewis' view of Gower as a romantic is a misreading. In Lewis' fictional writings his highest achievement remains 'the myth of *Till We Have Faces*' (Lawler, 1966, p139). Lewis evokes the quality of myth in this work and he defined this quality as suggesting the inevitable. Suspense and surprise are therefore of secondary importance in Lewis' creation of myth in fiction. The myth expressed by Lewis in *Till We Have Faces* is an example, for Lawler, of Lewis' view of 'ultimate truth' (Lawler, 1966, p140) emerging from myth, and this truth justifies the romantic impulse for Lewis.

1966 Moorman, C., *The Precincts of Felicity: The Augustinian City of the Oxford Christians*, Gainesville, University of Florida Press

Tolkien, Williams, Eliot, Sayers and Lewis are considered in light of Augustine's notions of the earthly and heavenly city and their mythical overtones.

1969 (Jan.) Hannay, M.P.,

'C.S. Lewis' Theory of Mythology' in
Mythlore, No. 1

Hannay notes Lewis and Tolkien's contribution to raising interest in the study of mythology. Hannay comments on Lewis' view of God sending 'good dreams' to man through myth, and the notion of Semitic myth being guided by God. Whilst history notes events, myth conveys essence. Orual's hearing of the story in Essur is her life related in mythic form, according to Hannay. Bultmann's notion of demythologising is explained as the removal of supernatural elements from Bible stories. Whilst Christianity embodies myth, other myth systems are 'merely images' (Hannay, 1969, p15). Lewis' theories of myth are explored along with his notion of *Sehnsucht* and myth in his fictions. Problems emerge with the Greek word *muthos* which meant any story, whilst true myth corresponds to Lewis' criteria in *Experiment in Criticism*. Various contradictions emerge however, not least being that myth is a divine revelation from God and also something created by 20th Century writers. Hannay maintains that 'descriptions of reality are mythic' (Hannay, 1969, p23) and suggest truth and that Lewis' fictions offer a model for such truth.

1970 White, W.,

The Image of Man in C.S. Lewis, Hodder
and Stoughton

White mentions Cassirer (see White, 1970, p36), along with Barfield and Langer, as proponents of the view that myth should not be considered as child-like philosophy. White's second chapter outlines Lewis' view of myth, metaphor and religious meaning. Words are secondary to myth, myth rises beyond them and draws power from the pattern of events, observes White. Lewis' 'concept of myth is shaped by a Platonic interpretation of literature' (White, 1970, p37). Myth can provide a special essence of meaning transcending fact and thus the Genesis creation myth is 'truer than history' (White, 1970, p38). On another level myth becomes fact with the Incarnation. Language inevitably fails to provide the kind of truth that a myth can, although myth is also a kind of language, according to White (see White, 1970, p44). Myth offers meaning on non-literal levels and for Lewis it offers the suggestion of God's greater reality through the power of images. Bultmann and Biblical criticism are also considered in relation to Lewis' views on myth. White maintains that Lewis' religious convictions are carried through 'a fresh mythology' (White, 1971, p55).

1970 Norwood, W.D.,

'C.S. Lewis' Portrait of Aphrodite' in
Southern Quarterly, 8

Various critics of Lewis are considered. Whilst Ungit has many faces, she is also the 'face' of the love of God. Naturalism, Supernaturalism and Christian doctrine are also discussed by Norwood.

- 1970 Donaldson, E.T., 'The Myth of Courtly Love' in *Speaking of Chaucer*, Athlone Press, pp. 154-163, reprinted in *Critical Thoughts: 1, Critical Essays on C.S. Lewis*, (1992) Watson, G., (Ed.) Scholar (sic.) Press

Donaldson asserts that courtly love is a myth. However, for Donaldson, this provides courtly love with 'added reality' (Donaldson, 1970, p135).

- 1970 Hannay, M., 'Arthurian and Cosmic Myth in *That Hideous Strength*' in *Mythlore* (Autumn 1970) No. 6, Vol. 2, No. 2

Hannay observes the use of Arthurian myth in *That Hideous Strength*. For Hannay the 'cosmic myth (of previous Ransom books) cannot function on earth as it can on distant planets' (Hannay, 1970, p7). Lewis wanted an 'intensely British myth' (Hannay, 1970, p7) and used the four elements of Arthurian myth: the Logres/Britain battle, the Fisher-King, Merlin, and 'the remnant of Logres' (Hannay, 1970, p7). The 'Britain' element is secular reality whilst Logres is 'the Arthurian ideal' (Hannay, 1970, p7). Merlin's magic is considered along with grail myth and the notion that Ransom's wounded heel derives from Genesis 3:15. Sources include Charles Williams, Thomas Malory, Ware and Layamon. Hannay finds the culminating descent of the Gods to promote a sense of 'great harmony' (Hannay, 1970, p9) with the cosmic myth of Lewis' previous space novels.

- 1971 Reilly, R.J., *Romantic Religion, A Study of Barfield, Lewis, Williams, and Tolkien*, University of Georgia Press

Barfield's influence on Lewis is considered by Reilly. Meaning has divided over time and become a plurality according to the views of Barfield on language development. Lewis accepted Barfield's 'general world-view' (Reilly, 1971, p106). However, for Reilly, Lewis also 'accepted Barfield's evolving spiritual universe' (Reilly, 1971, p107) and was influenced by Barfield's notion of mythology as 'the ghost of concrete meaning' (Barfield in Reilly, 1971, p107). Thus myth is, in this sense, true and an 'embodiment of the consciousness which evolved it' (Reilly, 1971, p107). For Reilly the myth of *Till We Have Faces* prefigures, and symbolically represents, the Incarnation.

- 1971 Hooper, W., 'Past Watchful Dragons: the Fairy Tales of C.S. Lewis' in *Imagination and the Spirit, Essays in Literature and the Christian Faith Presented to Clyde S. Kilby*, Huttar, C., (Ed.) (1971) William B. Eerdmans

Walter Hooper contemplates the mixing of mythical elements in the Narnia Chronicles and the way that myth influenced Lewis' theological and intellectual development. Hooper also includes in his essay a definition of myth that he found in one of Lewis' notebooks along with an extract on myth from a letter from Lewis to Greeves written during Lewis' atheistic period. Lewis' views on joy, longing, the numinous, and the Gospels are also considered.

- 1971 Urang, G., *Shadows of Heaven, Religion and Fantasy in the Fiction of C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and J.R.R. Tolkien*, SCM Press

Urang notes that these writers insisted that they were 'writing not allegory but "myth"' (Urang, 1971, p2). Urang observes that the 'entire "silent planet" myth ... is based on mythical, apocalyptic hints from the Bible' (Urang, 1971, p14), and he notes the relation between myth and reality promoted in the *Cosmic Trilogy*. *Perelandra* has a 'mythic base' (Urang, 1971, p18) and a 'mythic narrative' (Urang, 1971, p19) for Urang. Weston becomes an 'archetypal figure' (Urang, 1971, p18) and the King and Queen of *Perelandra* have a 'mythological resonance' (Urang, 1971, p19). In *That Hideous Strength* 'biblical and ... Christian allusions surround the supposedly neutral mythic material' (Urang, 1971, p26). Urang criticises *That Hideous Strength* proposing that 'The myth itself seems synthetic and contrived' (Urang, 1971, p27) and this is because the 'mythical apparatus from the earlier books ... (struggles) to be integrated with the Arthurian material he (Lewis) now wishes to introduce' (Urang, 1971, p27). Thus the final book of Lewis' trilogy fails as myth because it 'has neither the haunting simplicity nor the focused intensity required for mythopoeic power' (Urang, 1971, p27). Considering each author, Urang ponders myth and the power of the imagination, allegory and myth, mythic patterns and the view that the 'myth of progress, for example' (Urang, 1971, p139) emerges in these writers as an object 'for ironic and satirical treatment' (Urang, 1971, p139).

- 1972 (Dec.) Como, J., 'Myth and Belief in *Perelandra*' in *CSL: The Bulletin of the New York C.S. Lewis Society*, No 38.

Como proposes that 'the power of Myth accounts for belief' (Como, 1972, p2) in *Perelandra* and he attempts to resolve the relation of myth and belief in this work. Since *Perelandra* is not allegory its 'correspondences are symbolical' (Como, 1972, p2). The work embodies Christian myth and otherness, impossibles and preternaturals. Como

turns to Frazer and Jung's work on belief and myth in primitive cultures to try to throw light on Lewis' treatment of this theme in *Perelandra*.

1973 Lindskoog, K., *The Lion of Judah, The Theology of C.S. Lewis Expressed in His Fantasies for Children*, Eerdmans

Although mainly concerned with Lewis' theology, Lindskoog also has some interesting insight into Lewis and myth. The encounters, in the other world of Narnia, with giants, dryads, centaurs, fauns etc., suggest to Lindskoog that 'all elements of myth as we know them are shadows of a foreign reality' (Lindskoog, 1973, p37). Lewis' children's fiction and space books thus promote the opposite philosophy to that described in the introduction to *Poetry and Prose in the Sixteenth Century* in which Lewis lamented the loss of the 'genial universe'.

1973 (Sept.) Fitzpatrick, J., 'Myth in the Apologetic Works' in *CSL: The Bulletin of the New York C.S. Lewis Society*, No 47.

Fitzpatrick observes how valuable 'a feeling for mythical and fantastic modes' (Fitzpatrick, 1973, p4) has been to Lewis' theological, critical, and fictional works. However, it put Lewis at odds with the 'demythologization' of much twentieth century theological criticism. Fitzpatrick provides a useful summary of Lewis' debates and views on myth, particularly the Gospel stories and the nature of religion and the way that truth can be conveyed in myth.

1973-74 Hollows, S., 'Fantasy and Myth in the Fictional Works of C.S. Lewis' M.A. thesis, University of Birmingham

Hollows considers myth in Lewis' fictions and other writings. Insight into myth and fantasy is gleaned from Maud Bodkin, Alan Garner, Jung, Tolkien, Williams and Chad Walsh. *Out of the Silent Planet* is considered as myth according to the criteria Lewis specifies in *Experiment in Criticism*. It also challenges conceptions of space according to popular myths. Since Lewis alters the pattern of the myth in *Perelandra* the new pattern is 'that of redemption' (Hollows, 1974, p71). Hollows identifies Maud Bodkin's descent, death and rebirth myth pattern in Ransom's struggles with the Un-man (ibid., p72). Lewis' views on religion, literature, Jung's 'collective unconscious', and mythology as 'gleams of celestial strength' falling on man, are all brought into what Hollows describes as 'a myth to explain the mystery of myth' (Hollows, 1974, p77). The threads of myth are brought together in the Great Dance in *Perelandra* (ibid., p78), according to Hollows. Lewis' generation of the 'silent planet' myth is a transforming of myths already extant so that 'the life of the myth is handed forward' (Hollows, 1974, p81). *Till We Have Faces* reworks Apuleius' myth and, for Hollows, 'has the strongest

sense of underlying ‘Northerness’ (sic) of any of Lewis’s books’ (Hollows, 1974, p137).

1974 Carnell, C.S., *Bright Shadow of Reality, C.S. Lewis and the Feeling Intellect*, William Eerdmans.

Corbin Scott Carnell observes *Sehnsucht*, Lewis’ term for deep longing and desire, that emerged from Lewis’ encounters with mythic northernness in the poems of Longfellow, the operas of Wagner and works of William Morris. Thus ‘Where religion had failed, Wagner and Norse mythology were able to awaken that strange excitement...’ (Carnell, 1974, p42). Carnell draws a distinction between Lewis’ *Pilgrim’s Regress* and *The Great Divorce*, which primarily use allegory, and *The Cosmic Trilogy*, Narnia books, and *Till We Have Faces* ‘all of which, though they have allegorical elements, may more properly be called myths’ (Carnell, 1974, p105). Great myths, as found in the Bible and pagan writings, suggest ‘the nondescribable’ (Carnell, 1974, p106) and myth ‘points to realities which simply cannot be discussed in literal language’ (Carnell, 1974, p107). For the evocation of awe and ‘majesty, unquenchable longing, we must look to ... myth’ (Carnell, 1974, p108).

1974 Fuller, E., ‘After the Moon Landings: A further report on the Christian Spaceman C.S. Lewis’ in *Myth, Allegory and Gospel, An Interpretation of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, G.K. Chesterton, Charles Williams*, Bethany Fellowship, Inc.

Advances in science and technology do not affect Lewis’ space tales because they are symbolic stories, according to Fuller. The ‘imaginative story-teller’ (Fuller, 1974, p86) has had to extend ever outward in search of his locations for the marvellous. From Grimm’s Märchen and tales of ogres in local woods, the fantastic is now set further afield on alien worlds. It is an extension to the unknown that evokes questions of God, the Devil, the spirit and the spiritual impact of space exploration on mankind. Lewis embraced the mystery aspect of religion and realised that with each new space probe new mysteries were revealed rather than new answers necessarily being provided. The Christian mystery lies at the heart of the Lewis’ books according to Fuller.

1975 Manlove, C.N., *Modern Fantasy Five Studies*, Cambridge University Press

Colin Manlove explains that the separation of the ‘three elements’ (Manlove, 1975, p140), truth, myth and fact, is reflected for Lewis in man’s fallen and thus divided state.

1975 Barfield, O., 'C.S. Lewis and Historicism' (August 1975) in Barfield, O., (1989) *Owen Barfield on C.S. Lewis*, Tennyson, G.B., (Ed.) Wesleyan University Press

Barfield proposed that inconsistencies emerge in Lewis' view of myth, history and the division inspired by the Fall because, for Barfield, Lewis was 'aware, with Jung and Eliade and the others, that myth is especially characteristic of the earlier stages of human consciousness. And he seems to have been interested, up to a point, in the nature of these earlier stages. *Yet* he emphatically denied any recognisable, certainly any *significant*, evolution or development of consciousness in the course of human history, and this denial applied as much to the fall of man and his redemption as to any other pattern anyone may think he discerns in that history' (Barfield, 1989, p71). Barfield also notes that for Lewis 'Our present worldview ... though commonly believed to be based on scientific method, is itself only one more myth ... and may bring about the end of civilization as we know it' (Barfield, 1989, p79).

1975 Loganbill, D., 'Myth, Reality, and *Till We Have Faces*' in *Man's "Natural Powers": Essays for and about C.S. Lewis*, Tripp, R.P., Jr. (Ed.) The Society for New Language Study

For Loganbill *Till We Have Faces* shouldn't be read as allegory or symbolism but as myth. He sees Lewis' view of myth as a 'shadow of Christianity' (Loganbill, 1975, p55). Lewis' novel attempts to 'reconstruct the primitive mythopoeic consciousness' (Loganbill, 1975, p56). Too often critics look for allegorical or metaphorical interpretations of the novel, failing to appreciate its 'mythological associations' (Loganbill, 1975, p56) and 'wholeness' (Loganbill, 1975, p56) as a work of art. Art, such as a painting, works upon the observer and makes us 'receive', if we are open to contemplate what it is rather than what it might refer to. We need to similarly contemplate myth in order to 'know the reality which the truths are supposed to be about' (Loganbill, 1975, p56). Loganbill observes that Merlin in *That Hideous Strength* is an example of an older kind of consciousness, a consciousness more in sympathy with nature than modern man's. Similarly *Till We Have Faces* is removed from our intellectual world and requires an appreciation of the older kind of consciousness. It is 'altogether "unpsychological"' (Loganbill, 1975, p56). Loganbill proposes the need to emerge from our own 'world' in order to develop an appreciation of the world of *Till We Have Faces*.

1975 Dockery, C.D., 'The Myth of the Shadow in the Fantasies of Williams, Lewis, and Tolkien' doctoral dissertation, Auburn University

Carl Dockery investigates seven novels by Charles Williams, Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* and C.S. Lewis' *Cosmic Trilogy*. Dockery's thesis considers the opposition of

'light' and 'dark' as a polarity that 'determines the direction of meaning' (Dockery, 1975, pvi) in these works. Images of light and dark evoke 'immediate experience' (Dockery, 1975, pvii) and good and evil are 'interpretations of that experience' (Dockery, 1975, pvii). Dockery considers the myth of these works and uses the psychological theory of 'Jung's concept of the symbol' (Dockery, 1975, pvii) to support his view of structure mediating 'the authentic communication of the work' (Dockery, 1975, pvii). His psychological reading addresses the problem of the darkness 'dynamic' (Dockery, 1975, pvii) in transforming images of light. Jung's notion of shadow archetype illuminates these structures. Using psychology he develops an 'analysis of form' (Dockery, 1975, pvii), moving away from approaches that emphasise the Christianity of these authors. Dockery's 'myths of the shadow' (Dockery, 1975, pviii) suggest patterns that emerge in modern experience and he also draws upon the work of Alan Watts to help determine the shared symbolic nature of these fantasies. Scientism emerges in Lewis' myth portraying diabolical powers threatening man by attacking his 'roots' in mythopoeic nature in *The Cosmic Trilogy*.

1976 (Jan.) Stahl, J.T.,

'The Nature and Function of Myth in the Christian Thought of C.S. Lewis' in *CSL: The Bulletin of the New York C.S. Lewis Society*, No75.

Stahl considers Lewis' understanding of myth by contrasting his view of it, as a literary mode having special significance in the Gospel stories, with the approaches to myth advanced by Rudolf Bultmann and Mircea Eliade. Whilst Bultmann's demythologising emphasises history, Eliade's view of the importance of ritual leads to myth's value for psychological and social understanding. In contrast Lewis' views on myth from *Experiment in Criticism* and *The Allegory of Love* reveal confusion emerging, for Stahl, between myth as a literary form and metaphor, allegory, symbol and parable. For example, allegory has changed over the centuries until with Spenser's use the allegorical personifications 'become persons at points and act out of character' (Stahl, 1976, p7). Pure allegorical personifications remain constricted by the allegory that they personify. The immaterial is expressed consciously in allegory, whilst symbolism reveals the immaterial beyond the material. In the Christian story myth becomes confused with parable and moral meaning. Stahl attempts to distinguish various literary genre and to clear myth from pejorative connotations. Ultimately he affirms myth's 'positive cognitive function in Christian thought' (Stahl, 1976, p8) whilst rejecting 'historicity ... (and) non-cognitive therapeutic' (Stahl, 1976, p8) views of myth as negative.

1976 Barfield, O.,

'Some Reflections on *The Great Divorce* of C.S. Lewis' in *Mythlore* (September 1976) No. 13, Vol. 4, No. 1

Barfield maintains that Lewis 'evinced a strong and warm feeling for myth' (Barfield, 1976, p7) in his various capacities as critic, poet and fiction writer. Barfield notes an 'atomically rational Lewis and mythopoeic Lewis' (Barfield, 1976, p7) that come

together in *The Great Divorce*, although Barfield maintains that they do not ‘unite, but they do at least join hands’ (Barfield, 1976, p7). *The Great Divorce* is ‘itself a kind of myth’ (Barfield, 1976, p7) and Lewis had a ‘firm intuition of the substantial reality of myth’ (Barfield, 1976, p7).

1976	Wood, D.A.,	‘The Pattern in the Myth: Archetypal Elements in C.S. Lewis’s <i>Till We Have Faces</i> ’ doctoral dissertation, University of Tulsa
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Archetypal and mythic patterns convey philosophical themes in Lewis’ fiction according to Wood. She concentrates on *Till We Have Faces* but also looks at *The Pilgrim’s Regress* and *The Last Battle* in order to understand how Lewis’ skills are honed for his writing of *Till We Have Faces*. Many of Lewis’ writings about myth are examined and his movement from allegory to myth is noted. *Till We Have Faces* has a complexity, multiple meaning, redemptive elements and evokes ways of seeing. Orual becomes Psyche and develops unselfish love for another. However Lewis’ triumph lies in conveying the qualities of the god that finally appears to Orual without recourse to a word picture, as employed for Aslan’s realisation as a lion, in order to convey majesty. Thus beauty, power and Paradise contribute to the god’s presence for Orual.

1976 (Dec.)	Patterson, N-L.,	‘Narnia and the North: The Symbolism of Northernness in the Fantasies of C.S. Lewis’ in <i>Mythlore</i> , No. 14 Vol. 4 No. 2
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From Carnell’s work on Lewis and Northernness, Patterson notes that Lewis gained aesthetic Joy from myths of the North. What Lewis called the ‘northernness’ was the main appeal to him of William Morris’ works. However Patterson ‘explain(s) the error Carnell makes in referring to Longfellow’s poem, “Tegnér’s Drapa,” as “Tegner’s Drapa,” as if it were a translation by Longfellow of a work called *Drapa* by Tegnér, rather than the poetic encomium of Tegnér’s death which Longfellow actually wrote’ (Patterson, 1976, p10). In his autobiography, Lewis refers to the piece as ‘the unrhymed translation of *Tegner’s Drapa*’ (see Lewis, 1977e, p19) and mentions also Longfellow’s *Saga of King Olaf*. The word “‘Drapa” means ecomium {sic} or eulogy’ (Patterson, 1976, p11) and ‘Bishop Tegnér was a Swedish poet’ (Patterson, 1976, p10). When Tegnér died in 1846 Longfellow published his poem ‘Tegnér’s Drapa’, originally entitled ‘Tegnér’s Death’. There is a conflict between the northern myths of blood and force and the meekness inherent in Christ, thus the poems suggest the theme of the passing of the pagan northern world into that of the Christian. This theme emerges in the images and motifs that Patterson goes on to explore in *The Voyage of the ‘Dawn Treader’* as well as other Narnia works. There is a relation of the north and prophecy, for which Patterson draws upon Mircea Eliade’s *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (1970). Patterson also examines the north/south division in Northern mythology in Charles Williams and J.R.R. Tolkien’s works.

1977 Zogby, S.J., 'Triadic Patterns in Lewis's Life and Thought' in *The Longing for a Form, Essays on the Fiction of C.S. Lewis*, Schakel, P.J., (Ed.) The Kent State University Press

For Zogby the four tasks of Psyche in *Till We Have Faces* are phases towards religious understanding. Zogby observes that in this work Lewis 'portrays the last chapter of pagan myth before the Incarnation' (Zogby, 1977, p34).

1977 Van Der Weele, S.J., 'From Mt Olympus to Glome; C.S. Lewis' Dislocation of Apuleius' "Cupid and Psyche" in *Till We Have Faces*' in *The Longing for a Form, Essays on the Fiction of C.S. Lewis*, Schakel, P.J., (Ed.) The Kent State University Press

Van Der Weele discusses myth in *Till We Have Faces*, making comparisons between Apuleius' Cupid and Psyche myth and Lewis' novelistic retelling.

1977 Howard, A., 'Till We Have Faces and its Mythological and Literary Precursors' in *Mythlore* (March 1977) No 15 Vol. 4 No 3

Howard considers Graves' translation of Apuleius' Cupid and Psyche tale and the problems of categorising *Till We Have Faces*.

1977 Kilby, C.S., 'Till We Have Faces: An Interpretation' in *The Longing for a Form, Essays on the Fiction of C.S. Lewis*, Schakel, P.J., (Ed.) The Kent State University Press

Kilby considers Lewis' ideas of the meaning of myth in *Till We Have Faces* in relation to blood sacrifice and Ungit's temple. Kilby proposes that Bardia is an example of a man living according to Stoic philosophy. Bardia's notion of 'all gods' country' beyond the sacred tree is 'part of the mythology of Glome' (Kilby, 1977, p180) and this episode suggests to Kilby 'Lewis's conception of how myth becomes encrusted with "filth"' (Kilby, 1977, p180) since the Glomians have 'brutalised' the gods' country by making it the haunt of the Shadowbrute. The many transformations in the story are a 'troublesome element' (Kilby 1977, p180) for Kilby. However the story does have an 'almost unlimited mythic quality' (Kilby, 1977, p181).

- 1977 Chapman, E., 'Images of the Numinous in T.H White and C.S. Lewis' in *Mythlore* (June 1977) No. 16, Vol. 4, No. 4

Mythopoeic works take us out of the mundane, for Chapman. Beauty and terror can be found in myths and they can evoke numinous images. Various approaches to myth are considered including narrative and structural. Lewis' notion of myth is close to the ancients' views, according to Chapman. Lewis' definition in *Experiment in Criticism* is a 'narrower meaning than the anthropologists usually had for the word' (Chapman, 1977, pp. 3-4). Chapman considers mythic images, some of which can evoke the numinous response in line with Rudolf Otto's notion of the numinous. Chapman promotes the 'concept of the "numinous" myth' (Chapman, 1977, p5) and finds T.H. White's work lacking in this quality whilst Lewis succeeds in this evocation. Chapman derides the 'facile imitators' (Chapman, 1977, p8) that have followed Lewis and Tolkien.

- 1977 (Nov.) Timmerman, J.H., 'Logres and Britain: the Dialectic of C.S. Lewis's *That Hideous Strength*' in *CSL: The Bulletin of the New York C.S. Lewis Society*, Vol. 1, No. 1, whole issue No. 97

That Hideous Strength is considered in relation to the Tao, timelessness, mythic elements of Arthurian legend, the Grail quest, Jessie Weston, Charles Williams, Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, symbols invoking Christian meaning, Merlin and Celtic Druids, beliefs about nature and Logres and Britain.

- 1977 Morris, F., 'Metaphor and Myth: Shaping Forces in C.S. Lewis' Critical Assessment of Medieval and Renaissance Literature' doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania

Morris explores symbolism, allegory, mythical truth in literature and the early influences upon Lewis' notions of myth and metaphor. Plato and Owen Barfield are cited among the main influences upon Lewis' notions of metaphor and myth. Morris seeks the 'cognitive value of metaphor' (Morris, 1977, p17), and notes Lewis' tracing of Medieval and Renaissance notions of allegory and symbolism. Morris observes the epistemological role of myth in Lewis' thought (see Morris, 1977, p26 and Ch. 2). There are lengthy quotes from the unpublished *Summa*, the debate between Lewis and Barfield concerning metaphysics that was written in the 1920s. Lewis' views on myth and metaphor in sections XX, pp. 61-4, and XXI, p65, of the *Summa* reveal insight into the role of spirit and imaginative experience in myth and symbol. On page 58 and 59 of the study, Morris comments on the similarity between some of the ideas in Barfield's *Poetic Diction* and Ernst Cassirer's philosophy. Suzanne Langer, translator of Cassirer's *Language and Myth*, had previously noted (see *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art* (1953), pp. 237-38) both these thinkers' study of 'nondiscursive symbolism' (Langer in

Morris, 1977, p58). Whilst Cassirer came to the problem through science and unscientific thought, Barfield's route involved poetry. Barfield and Cassirer have similar views on the development of human consciousness. However, Barfield commented that he knew no German when writing *Poetic Diction* and 'had never heard of Cassirer' (Barfield in Morris, 1977, p59). Barfield later read Cassirer's works and acknowledged admiration for them in the afterword of the third edition of *Poetic Diction*. For Barfield 'myths preceded metaphors' (Morris, 1977, p94) and the 'primitive unified vision' (Morris, 1977, p94) broke up after metaphor-making began. Mythology is thus 'the ghost of concrete meaning' (Barfield in Morris, 1977, p95). Although 'Lewis accepted this aphorism' (Morris, 1977, p95) his anti-historicism remained strong and so, whilst he apparently embraced Barfield's notion of 'ancient unities', Lewis struggled with the historical process that Barfield proposed in support of his theory.

1978	Meilander, G.,	<i>The Taste For the Other: The Social and Ethical Thought of C.S. Lewis</i> , Eerdmans
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Lewis is considered as a mythmaker, theologian and writer of *Till We Have Faces*.

1978	Chard, J.M.,	'Some Elements of Myth and Mysticism in C.S. Lewis' Novel <i>Till We Have Faces</i> ' in <i>Mythlore</i> , (Autumn 1978) No. 18, Vol. 5, No. 2
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Chard proposes that for *Till We Have Faces* Lewis drew upon Sufism, Ishtar (a Semitic deity), and Inanna of Babylonian myth. Orual is sometimes referred to as Maia and Chard notes Marjorie Wright's identification of Maia with Maya, a Hindu goddess. For Chard Sufi doctrine throws light upon Orual's desire to acquire a 'face', and metamorphosis or individuation is explored. Whilst Orual attempts the tasks of Psyche, tasks were also undertaken by Inanna, according to Chard. Chard draws parallels with alchemical processes and the transformations in *Till We Have Faces*.

1978	Adey, L.,	<i>C.S. Lewis's "Great War" with Owen Barfield</i> , University of Victoria
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Adey explores the *Summa* or "Great War" debate between Lewis and Barfield. Myth predates modern man's inner and outer distinction and 'points back to the undivided reality primal man directly apprehended' (Adey, 1978, p23). Mythology is considered in light of Barfield's theory that it is 'the ghost of concrete meaning' (Barfield in Adey, 1978, p20). Adey observes that there is a frontier between myth and historical fact that 'Lewis very much wanted to preserve' (Adey, 1978, p30). Spiritual knowledge was preserved in myths (see Adey, 1978, p28), and Plato, mysticism, perceptions of nature, mind and spirit are also considered. Adey observes that 'In the *Summa* Lewis follows Plato in considering Spirit (his term for Being) superior to souls, which have the property of Becoming' (Adey, 1978, p20).

1979

Walsh, C.,

The Literary Legacy of C.S. Lewis,
Sheldon Press

Walsh notes the theme of terrestrial mythology in relation to reality on other worlds in Lewis' works. Lewis' use of the mythology of Venus for his *Cosmic Trilogy* indicates that his 'mythology ... has some kind of universality' (Walsh, 1979, p92). For Walsh 'Lewis's symbolism is not a private system ... But the traditional symbols serve him well' (Walsh, 1979, p92), and Lewis reinvigorates them. Whilst *Perelandra* evokes the universal myth of paradise, Aslan's singing in *The Magician's Nephew* is one of the 'great creation myths' (Walsh, 1979, p136). Aslan's presence in the Narnia stories makes them unique, and a 'holy land of the unconscious where the mighty archetypes dwell, and both sacred and demonic figures act out their ritual dramas' (Walsh, 1979, pp. 137-8). The reader has to confront these archetypes and realise their inner reality and transforming power. A confusion of symbol, mythology and theology arises (see (Walsh, 1979, p156). Whilst the mythology in *The Cosmic Trilogy* retains a kind of clarity, in *Till We Have Faces* 'Categories break down' (Walsh, 1979, p174) and this corresponds to the prelogical and less differentiated consciousness Lewis seeks to evoke. Whilst Lewis exploited pagan myth, his 'central symbol system is biblical. The pagan gods must fit themselves into Jehovah's universe' (Walsh, 1979, p244). For Walsh the books heal the division between 'myth, fact, and truth' (Walsh, 1979, p248), and Lewis succeeds for Walsh in conjuring 'other worlds corresponding to the intuitions of mankind's mythological dreams' (Walsh, 1979, p251).

1979

Peter J. Schakel

*Reading with the Heart: The Way into
Narnia*, William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.

For Schakel, the Narnia books have 'universal meanings as fairy tales' (Schakel, 1979, pxii). He emphasises the importance of feelings when 'entering' Lewis' "secondary worlds". The 'archetypal motifs, characters, and images' (Schakel, 1979, pxiv) are Schakel's main concern. The books appear to pass 'into the realm of myth' (Schakel, 1979, p4) and Lewis' notions of myth's divine truth and 'inevitable shape' support the notion of myth communicating 'imaginatively, not intellectually' (Schakel, 1979, p4). *The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader"* and *The Last Battle* are 'high myth, communicating ... directly to the imagination and emotions...' (Schakel, 1979, p5). The Narnian works are more mythical than allegorical for Schakel. He observes Northrop Frye's *mythoi*, tragedy, comedy, romance and irony, which Frye aligns with the four seasonal cycles. These emerge in the Narnia books according to Schakel. Joseph Campbell, Robert Graves and Carl Jung are also mentioned. Schakel maintains that 'Frye's literary approach to archetypes would ... be more acceptable to Lewis than the more psychological approaches of Graves and Campbell' (Schakel, 1979, p139). Spring, summer, autumn and winter provide archetypal imagery that poets exploit to evoke a relationship to the life cycle. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* begins with the land locked in winter, and the sun's cycle is important in *The Horse and His Boy*. Narnia 'comes full circle' (Schakel, 1979, p8) with its ending in *The Last Battle*. A 'pattern of significance' (Frye in Schakel, 1979, p8) emerges both in the life and seasonal cycles. A

sense of ‘loss and regaining of identity’ (Frye in Schakel, 1979, p8), a kind of death and rebirth, can be discerned which is the ‘monomyth’ that can be found in literature. Schakel observes this in *The Silver Chair*, *Prince Caspian*, and *The Voyage of the “Dawn Treader”*. A useful diagram on p97 explains archetypal cyclic structure and narrative patterns that together compose the monomyth.

1979 Griffiths, A.B., ‘The Adventure of Faith’ in *C.S. Lewis at the Breakfast Table, and Other Reminiscences*, Macmillan Pub. Co.

Griffiths discusses his long-standing friendship with C.S. Lewis and the importance of Christian mythology in Lewis’ conversion. The problem of myth and history is discussed in relation to the Incarnation.

1979 Payne, L., *Real Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Works of C.S. Lewis*, Cornerstone Books.

Till We Have Faces is a mythic work, for Payne. The notion of finding self in union with Christ is considered.

1980 Reddy, A.F., ‘*Till We Have Faces*: an Epistle to the Greeks’ in *Mosaic*, 13

Religion versus rationalism considered in *Till We Have Faces*. Reddy comments on Lewis’ sense of the validity of myth.

1980 Howard, T., ‘The Uses of Myth’ in *Mythlore* (March 1980) No. 23, Vol. 7, No. 1

Howard considers various aspects of myths such as their narratives and remoteness. When Ransom returns to Earth from Mars he at first declines to tell his story because people won’t believe him. However, as Howard notes, Ransom’s friend maintains that the important thing is that ‘a body of people will have *heard a story like yours*’ (Howard, 1980, p22; Howard’s italics). Howard notes Lewis’ belief that mundane things can be shown in a new light, or refreshed, through myth.

1980 Patterson, N-L., ‘The Host of Heaven, Astrological and Other Images of Divinity in the Fantasies of C.S. Lewis’ (Part 1) in *Mythlore* (Autumn 1980) No. 25, Vol. 7, No. 3

Patterson notes Greek, Roman, Mesopotamian and Norse mythological inspirations in Lewis’ works. These are ‘filtered through Medieval Christian culture’ (Patterson, 1980,

p19). Life was attributed to the stars by medieval thinkers and life and intelligence is restored to them in Lewis' fictional cosmology. However in II Kings 17:16 and 21:3 man is called to account for worshipping the heavenly hosts. Lewis' *The Discarded Image*, Jean Seznec's *Survival of the Pagan Gods*, Babylonian and Greek mythology provide insight into the planetary gods in Lewis' *Cosmic Trilogy*.

1981	Patterson, N-L.,	'The Host of Heaven, Astrological and Other Images of Divinity in the Fantasies of C.S. Lewis' (Part 2) in <i>Mythlore</i> (Winter 1981) No. 26, Vol. 7, No. 4
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Patterson continues her discussion of astrological and other divine images, moving on to consider the Narnian Chronicles and *Till We Have Faces*. The *Longaevi* are also considered.

1981	Hannay, M.P.,	<i>C.S. Lewis</i>
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Hannay notes Lewis' rejection of Freudian reductionism (see Hannay, 1981, p169) and promotion of 'the kingdom of myth' (Hannay, 1981, p170). She maintains that 'Lewis believed that myth is the essence of all great literature, whereas style, genre, and ideas are incidentals' (Hannay, 1981, p170). For Hannay myth is an independent form from literature, and rises above plot. Hannay suggests that it is 'in this tension between plot and theme that the myth most resembles life' (Hannay, 1981, p170). Thus Lewis strove to rise above the incidentals of transient existence. For Lewis the pattern of events is more important than words in a myth. The 'eternal element in myth makes it so valuable' (Hannay, 1981, p171). For Hannay Lewis' valued not only myth but 'the symbolic communication of eternal truth' (Hannay, 1988, p172). Hannay also considers Lewis' views on Christianity and myth, his definition of myth, views on pagan myth and mythopoeic fiction.

1981	Elgin, D.D.,	'True and False Myth in C.S. Lewis' <i>Till We Have Faces</i> ' in <i>Southern Central Bulletin</i> , 41, 98-101
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For Elgin Orual, the Fox and Bardia are rational whilst Ungit is mystical. There is an element of attraction in the rational and repulsion in Lewis' portrayal of Ungit. However it is ultimately revealed that the way of Ungit supplies true myth, truth that rationalism fails to achieve.

- 1981 Carnell, C.S., 'Ransom in C.S. Lewis' *Perelandra* as Hero in Transformation: Notes toward a Jungian Reading of the novel' in *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 14, No. 2, 'The Inklings', p68

Carnell considers Ransom as a Jungian mythic hero who 'fits the pattern of the monomyth' (Carnell, 1981, p68).

- 1981 (Oct.) Fitzpatrick, J., 'Lewis and Wagner' in *CSL: The Bulletin of the New York C.S. Lewis Society*, Issue 144, Vol. 12, No 12

Fitzpatrick explores Wagner in relation to Lewis and Tolkien, and identifies some Norse elements in Lewis' narrative poem *Dymer*.

- 1981 Glover, D.E., *C.S. Lewis, The Art of Enchantment*, Ohio University Press

Glover's book contains an extract from a letter written by Lewis on 22 August 1942 to Sister Penelope (held in the Bodleian) concerning mythology having 'divine and diabolical elements in it' (Lewis in Glover, 1981, p29). Thus Lewis did not 'believe people sat down and "made up" mythology' (Lewis in Glover, 1981, p29). Other extracts on myth are drawn from Lewis' letters to Milwood and Barfield. Glover mainly concentrates on exploring Lewis' criticism and fictions. He maintains that for Lewis myth has the power to move readers to appreciate 'highest truth' (Glover, 1981, p42). Glover notes that Lewis doesn't try to trace the sources of myths but treats them as compelling 'ultimate stories' (Glover, 1981, p55). Glover considers Lewis' description of myth in *Experiment in Criticism* (see Glover, 1981, p56). Lewis' academic literary interests, and the transforming longings that emerged from Northern myth, contributed to what Glover refers to as 'the central myth or most primal of experiences' (Glover, 1981, p56). This leads Glover to conclude that Lewis achieved self-transcendence through myth. Glover also considers Lewis' notion of myth as *preparatio evangelica*, its difference from allegory, its relation to symbolism, spiritual development and creative imagination. In *Till We Have Faces* Glover identifies two myths, that of the victim whose fate is miraculous and thus defies what is expected and the other myth is that of the 'unwilling victim' (Glover, 1981, p192) tormented by the gods.

- 1981 Smith, R.H., *Patches of Godlight: The Pattern of Thought of C.S. Lewis*, University of Georgia Press

Plato dominates Smith's book on Lewis. For Smith, both Lewis and Plato extensively used 'myth and analogy' (Smith, 1981, p9). The pagan dying and reviving god myths are considered as reflecting reality for Lewis. Pagan myths of Zeus the sky-father are,

for Lewis, 'only a Pagan dream of One far greater' (Lewis in Smith, 1981, p132). Smith observes that 'myth may reflect metaphysical reality without being literally true or factual' (Smith, 1981, p146). The tension between pagan myth and Christian myth emerges in Smith's analysis.

1982	Price, M.,	'All Shall Love Me and Despair, The Figure of Lilith in Tolkien, Lewis, Williams and Sayers' in <i>Mythlore</i> (Spring 1982) No. 31, Vol. 9, No. 1
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Lilith emerges in Tolkien's figure of Galadriel 'as she would become under the influence of the One Ring' (Price, 1982, p3). Williams includes aspects of Lilith in *Descent into Hell*, whilst Sayers uses the Lilith motif in her work *The Devil to Pay*. Lilith's attributes also crop up in the White and Green Witches of the Narnia books, according to Price.

1983	Schakel, P.J.,	'A Retelling Within a Myth Retold: The Priest of Essur and Lewisian Mythopoeitics' in <i>Mythlore</i> (Winter 1983) No. 34, Vol. 9, No. 4
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Schakel considers why Lewis' retold the myth of Cupid and Psyche. Awe, wonder and the numinous failed to emerge in Apuleius' version. For Lewis what was missing was 'sacrifice', a divine premonition of the event of Christ's sacrifice. Seasonal death and rebirth archetypes emerge in Lewis' use of the veiled Essurian statue of Istra.

1983	Schakel, P.J.,	'Seeing and Knowing: The Epistemology of C.S. Lewis's <i>Till We Have Faces</i> ' in <i>Seven: An Anglo-American Literary Review</i> , 4
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Different ways of seeing and knowing are considered. Myth emerges as a way to truth.

1983	Rawson, E.,	'The Fisher King in <i>That Hideous Strength</i> ' in <i>Mythlore</i> (Winter 1983) No. 34, Vol. 9, No. 4
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Rawson explores the Fisher King in *That Hideous Strength*, noting that he is ultimately healed whereas in many Grail stories he is not. The Fisher King is a prelude to Merlin's awakening for Rawson.

- 1983 Patterson, N-L., 'Bright-Eyed Beauty, Celtic Elements in Charles Williams, J.R.R. Tolkien, and C.S. Lewis' in *Mythlore*, No. 35, Vol. 10, No. 1

Welsh stories, brought together in the *Mabinogion*, provide insight into Celticism and Lewis 'was, in fact, a Celt' (Patterson, 1983, p9). However his boyhood inspiration came from Teutonic mythology. Lewis found Celtic myth sensuous, pagan and less reverent than Germanic myth (see Patterson, 1983, p9). Celtic elements emerge in his fictions and find 'fulfillment in Christian form' (Patterson, 1983, p10).

- 1984 (Jan.) Orme-Johnson, R.F., 'Psyche's Descent into the Underworld: The Transcending Pattern in Myth and Literature' doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland College Park

Apuleius' Psyche myth is examined, with emphasis upon Psyche's 'katabasis', her later apotheosis and the birth of her daughter. Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* is also explored more widely than just the Cupid and Psyche myth. In the second half of Orme-Johnson's study, the spiritual descent and rebirth pattern is analysed. A transcending model is proposed that broadly involves a metaphorical descent, inner self experience, and return with a holistic, integrated psyche. Orme-Johnson then considers six novels that use the Psyche myth, one of these being Lewis' *Till We Have Faces*. These works are explored with the transcending model in mind. The novel's use of Psyche suggests transcending to subtler levels of self and these levels are important for spiritual development.

- 1984 Hart, D.A., *Through the Open Door: A New Look at C.S. Lewis*, University of Alabama Press

In Chapter 2 'Myth: The Master Key', Hart observes that Lewis 'stressed the primacy of myth in literature before Joseph Campbell, Mircea Eliade, and Northrop Frye had established their reputations in that field' (Hart, 1984, p12). Myth provides the unity within Lewis' incredibly diverse works. The word 'myth' has a varied use in Lewis' writings, as a story 'transcending the laws of mathematics, the whole being greater than the sum of its parts' (Hart, 1984, p13), as a 'universal truth' (Hart, 1984, p13), and as stories that 'live in themselves' (Hart, 1984, p13). Myths are stories, for Hart, that impart or recreate 'universal human experience' (Hart, 1984, p13). Hart suggests that, like history, myth is a story or pattern of events. However, the patterns found in myth are more universal and deeper. The pattern of myth can so powerfully appeal to the imagination that 'it seems to have an existence of its own' (Hart, 1984, p16). Various works are considered that Lewis acknowledged as myths such as Orwell's *Animal Farm* which, despite its author's satirical and allegorical intentions, is a story transcending allegory, according to Lewis. For Hart, Lewis saw mythic form as different from literary form and more like the *Idea* (which is Platonic). Various literary works are considered in terms of their expression of thematic *Idea* and for how well they fit the novel form.

The *Idea* is distinct from genre, style and even from 'the writer's own ideas' (Hart, 1984, p20). However, in *Prometheus Unbound*, Shelley has set free a 'magnificent structural *Idea* of Prometheus set at liberty' (Hart, 1984, p20). Hart suggests that, for Lewis, art reflects an image of a beauty outside the artist.

1984	Schakel, P.J.,	<i>Reason and Imagination in C.S. Lewis, A Study of <u>Till We Have Faces</u></i> , Wm. B. Eerdmans
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Schakel notes Lewis' use of Athena to symbolise reason and Demeter as imagination (see Schakel, 1984, pix) in the poem 'Reason' and observes the way that Lewis struggled to reconcile and unify these two mental processes within his works, particularly in *Till We Have Faces*. Schakel maintains that myth, for Lewis, involved the 'use of narrative structure and archetypal elements to convey through the imagination universal or divine truths not accessible to the intellect alone' (Schakel, 1984, p5). Lewis wanted to give the Apuleian telling of the Cupid and Psyche myth a sense of the numinous, recalling Rudolf Otto's work on numinousness. Whilst Apuleius' tale is a myth, for Lewis it 'lacks the mystery and power characteristic of true myth' (Schakel, 1984, p61). Despite this statement Schakel acknowledges the notion of pagan sacrifice indicating 'divine hinting in poetic and ritual form at the same central truth which was later focussed and ... historicised in the Incarnation' (Lewis in Schakel, 1984, p64). Schakel identifies the Priest of Essur's telling as a way to 'guard against total subjectivity' (Schakel, 1984, p68) by its being a more 'authentic' version of the tale. Schakel describes Lewis' 'complete and abrupt change in attitude toward myth and the imagination' (Schakel, 1984, p108) realising its particular importance to Christianity in the area of sacrifice (see Schakel, 1984, p122). Schakel demonstrates how Lewis developed from viewing myth as lies, to embracing their truth and also from his limited 1930s views on myth to the more expansive views he held in the 1940s.

1984	Bergvall, A.,	'A Myth Retold, C.S. Lewis' <i>Till We Have Faces</i> ' in <i>Mythlore</i> , (Summer 1984) No. 39, Vol. 11, No. 1.
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Whilst Bergvall recognises that *Till We Have Faces* is a 'myth working on various levels' (Bergvall, 1984, p5), he goes on to explain that Apuleius' myth is 'demythologised' by Lewis' use of realism in making the characters believable people, and telling the tale as 'a factual event' (Bergvall, 1984, p6). It is the achievement of Lewis to overcome this kind of 'paradox' (Bergvall, 1984, p6) through portraying Psyche and Orual realistically whilst retaining their 'mythic qualities' (Bergvall, 1984, p6). Bergvall explores the devouring and sacrificial ritual within the novel that 'brings new life' (Bergvall, 1984, p7). Psyche is not to be thought of as symbolising Christ, 'she is rather part of the cosmic myth coming into focus' (Bergvall, 1984, p8), which it eventually did with Christ's Incarnation. Bergvall notes Lewis' view of religious truth emerging from pre-Incarnation myths. Lewis' retelling of the Cupid and Psyche myth succeeds in 'making an ancient myth come alive and speak to modern man' (Bergvall, 1984, p12).

1984 Patterson, N-L., 'Half Like a Serpent, The Green Witch in
The Silver Chair' in *Mythlore* (Autumn
1984) No. 40, Vol. 11, No. 2

In *The Silver Chair* the 'structure of the narrative is a descent-quest' (Patterson, 1984, p37), although rather than a hero we have a heroine in Jill Pole. Similar mythological examples can be found, for Patterson, in 'the descent of Inanna/Ishtar into the Underworld' (Patterson, 1984, p37). Patterson compares the Green Witch with Circe, a comparison previously made by Peter Schakel in *Reading With The Heart*. The Green Witch also exhibits aspects of Morgan Le Fey for Meredith Price. Patterson proposes that Lewis presents a 'complete mythologem of the feminine' (Patterson, 1984, p45) through the various aspects of the feminine archetype that Patterson identifies in her essay.

1985 (Jan.) Hinman, M., 'The Ritual Deaths and Rebirths of Elwin
Ransom' in *CSL: The Bulletin of the New
York C.S. Lewis Society*, No 183

Hinman continues the thread explored by Carnell (1981) concerning Ransom as a mythic hero who is transformed through his 'deaths' during visits to alien worlds. Ransom's journey to Venus in a coffin indicates a ritual 'death' for Hinman. On Ransom's arrival on Venus he is like a new-born in the waters of Perelandra and he gradually awakes to 'individual consciousness' (Hinman, 1985, p2). It is as though Ransom is born again into Perelandra's Mother environment. Ransom's encounter with Weston in a cave under water echoes Beowulf's heroic struggle. In keeping with mythic heroism, Ransom achieves an apotheosis in the Great Dance, followed by his return to Earth in the coffin signifying another 'death and rebirth' and promise of a higher place in Deep Heaven and continual purification as a result of his travails.

1986 Macky, P., 'Appeasing the gods in C.S. Lewis's *Till
We Have Faces*' in *Seven (VII), An Anglo-
American Literary Review*, Vol. 7, pp. 77-
89

Macky considers Lewis' retelling of the Cupid and Psyche myth, especially the mysteries behind the story, and Old and New Testament parallels. The pagan myths are 'dim foreshadowings' (Macky, 1986, p77) and 'powerful parables' (Macky, 1986, p77), whilst Hebrew myths are 'clearer foreshadowings' (Macky, 1986, p77). However in *Till We Have Faces* Lewis presents a 'myth that is clearer than the pagan foreshadowings' (Macky, 1986, p77). Macky also considers the significance of the myth of Iphigenia in relation to Psyche's sacrifice.

1986 Schakel, P.J., ‘Dance as Metaphor and Myth in Lewis, Tolkien, and Williams’ in *Mythlore*, (Spring 1986) No. 45, Vol. 12, No. 3

Dance is an image and symbol in Lewis’ fictions and has meaning on several levels. Notions of cosmic harmony and unity can be symbolised by dance. However dance leans toward the ceremonial, for Lewis. Schakel proposes that ‘Dance images myth itself ... it is imagination in motion’ (Schakel, 1986, p7) and is participatory. To see a dance is to witness the image but to participate in it is to experience the dance.

1987 Hyles, V., ‘On the Nature of Evil, The Cosmic Myths of Lewis, Tolkien and Williams’ in *Mythlore*, No.50, (Summer, 1987) Vol. 13, No. 4.

The nature of evil in Lewis’ cosmic myth preoccupies Vernon Hyles.

1987 Christopher, J.R., *C.S. Lewis*, Boston: Twayne

Christopher considers the changes to Apuleius’ myth in *Till We Have Faces* (see Christopher, 1987, p122 and p130).

1988 Filmer, K., ‘The Masks of Lilith: A Comparison of C.S. Lewis’s Reading of George MacDonald’s *Lilith* and *Till We Have Faces*’ in *CSL: The Bulletin of the New York C.S. Lewis Society*, Vol. 19, No. 3, Issue No. 219

Filmer’s comparison reveals similarities between Lilith and Ungit, particularly the possible commonality of the Armenian goddess Anahit, a goddess identified with Aphrodite. The notion of both Lilith and Ungit suggests Jung’s notion of ‘the “dark anima” of all human nature’ (Filmer, 1988, p2). Orual becomes Ungit and her ‘dark anima’ must be surrendered before she can find her true self. Dying to self is a notion recalling Matthew 10:39. For Filmer the Shadowbrute is paganism veiling the true God. She proposes that Lewis ‘achieves a synthesis between theology and myth’ (Filmer, 1988, p4).

1988	Donaldson, M.E.,	<i>Holy Places are Dark Places, C.S. Lewis and Paul Ricoeur on Narrative Transformation</i> , University Press of America.
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Donaldson explores *Till We Have Faces* as a 'narrative of transformation' (Donaldson, 1988, pxvii) mainly using the narrative theory of Paul Ricoeur. Donaldson notes the importance of the 'story-within-the-story' (Donaldson, 1988, p75) in *Till We Have Faces*, from which emerges sequence, significance and meaning. The significance of time emerges as something beyond mere sequence. The phenomenologists Heidegger and Husserl also provide Donaldson with insight into time.

1988	Blasdell, H.L.,	'...And There Shall The Lilith Repose' in <i>Mythlore</i> (Summer 1988) No. 54, Vol. 14, No. 4
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The title of Blasdell's article is taken from Isaiah 34:14. Lilith emerges from Hebrew mythology. Lilith is considered in Lewis' and Williams' works, and her origins are suggested by the mythical figures of Circe, Medusa, the Sirens and Alcina.

1988	Matheson, S.,	'C.S. Lewis and the Lion: Primitivism and Archetype in the Chronicles of Narnia' in <i>Mythlore</i> , (Autumn 1988), No. 55 Vol. 15 No. 1
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Matheson draws a distinction between those reading Narnia allegorically and those 'pseudo-allegorists' (Matheson, 1988, p13) who base their 'analyses on a one-to-one correspondence between the symbolism of the Chronicles and Christian symbolism' (Matheson, 1988, p13). Matheson identifies a 'tension between allegory and symbol in the Chronicles as well as the archetype which underpins these stories' (Matheson, 1988, p13). This tension goes back to Lewis' attempts to reconcile his intellect and imagination. Although he denied the Chronicles were 'deliberate allegory' (Matheson, 1988, p14) nevertheless there is 'an allegorical framework which entangles a symbolic narrative' (Matheson, 1988, p14), the more allegorical books being *The Magician's Nephew* and *The Last Battle*. For Matheson, Lewis' description of his writing as involving 'deliberate inventing' means 'shaping the archetype into recognisable symbols' (Matheson, 1988, p14). This shaping of archetypes runs contrary to Jung's view that the artist should leave 'interpretation to others' (Jung in Matheson, 1988, p14). Matheson also examines the failure of Christian symbols as art, primitivism, and the 'irruption of the Lion out of the dead Christian symbol' (Matheson, 1988, p15) in order for Lewis to capture 'the myth of the dying and reviving god' (Matheson, 1988, p15). The psychic quality of the gods is rediscovered.

Freshwater examines Lewis' 'views of myth (as) a "signal of transcendence," a gleam of the supernatural ... (which) points to the reality of Lewis's God-centered world view' (Freshwater, 1988, px). Lewis addresses the problem of reality, according to Freshwater, through both 'logic and myth' (Freshwater, 1988, p2). In *Till We Have Faces* Lewis does not attempt to 'analyze the human personality through reason ... (but instead) portray(s) its innermost workings through myth' (Freshwater, 1988, p2). The myth is brought 'alive through fictional narrative' (Freshwater, 1988, p2). Freshwater observes Lewis' interest in Jung's collective unconscious as a repository of archetypal images, and that the ancient myths can be viewed as 'such images recovered from the collective unconscious' (Freshwater, 1988, p15). Both Lewis and Jung 'share a mutual suspicion of those who would attempt to "demythologize" Christianity' (Freshwater, 1988, p16). Tolkien enabled Lewis' understanding of eternal truth in myth (see Freshwater, 1988, p20). Lewis' reactions to pagan myths of dying and reviving gods are considered in order to understand how he came to affirm that Myth became Fact in the story of Christ. Myth is understood as a Divine communication providing insight into reality (Freshwater, 1988, pp. 37-38). The Gospels are considered to be different from 'other mythological literature' (Freshwater, 1988, p47), and myth is considered in relation to the miraculous. Lewis brings the power of myth to life in his fictions.

Gwyneth Hood examines the parallels of Apuleius' tale with others involving the duality of husbands as both sexual beasts and love objects. Hood observes inconsistencies in Apuleius' telling of the myth of Cupid and Psyche, such as Venus' resentment at her son's love affair with Psyche, 'Why should not the God of Love fall in love, and who is Venus, of all goddesses, to resent it?' (Hood, 1988, p34). Elements of Apuleius' telling of the myth seem curtailed, such as the dragon-beast forewarned by the Oracle. The myth is, for Hood, less about the gods as divine beings, than about their actions reflecting motives more applicable to Roman aristocrats. However mythological undercurrents are explored, such as Venus' payment with kisses and Apollo's rancour for old wounds inflicted by Amor (Cupid). 'Beauty and the Beast', *Jane Eyre*, the tale of the 'Golden Wand', a Zulu myth, the Indian tale 'Tulisa', and the Norwegian fairy tale 'East of the Sun, West of the Moon', echo 'a similar plot logic' (Hood, 1988, p37). However, in Lewis' version Psyche's preternatural beauty means that others in the tale look upon her and see 'a better world than they know' (Hood, 1988, p39). Hood points out that 'Orual's strategy of lighting the lamp is absurd' (Hood, 1988, p42) since it would either rouse a beast that the girl could not fight, or expose an outlaw that would turn on her. The denial of sight of the god means Psyche has to 'grow in understanding through their mystical relationship' (Hood, 1988, p42).

- 1989 Moriarty, P., ‘C.S. Lewis’s *Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold* as a Literary Palimpsest’ (originally an M.Litt. thesis in 1988) doctoral dissertation, Trinity College, Dublin

Patricia Moriarty considers Lewis’ aesthetic. His *weltanschauung* incorporates elements from the philosophies of Plato, Augustin and Hegel. Lewis’ symbolism is drawn from the conventions of allegory, fairy tale, science fiction and romance. God is inexorable for Lewis. A palimpsest of spiritual experience is achieved in *Till We Have Faces*. Moriarty identifies that, for Lewis, the self must be abandoned in order to achieve union or an ‘At-One-Ment’ with God. Literature can describe the self’s relation with God. Lewis’ works promote an awareness of this relationship to God. Allegorical structures are explored in various Lewis’ works, and patterns of romance are considered in the Ransom books. However patterns can obscure *Logos* suggests Moriarty. Difficulties emerge through aesthetic structures attempting to describe the relationship between self and other (God). The workings of *Poeima*, *Logos* and *Mythos* are considered in Lewis fictions, culminating in Lewis’ most successful book, for Moriarty, *Till We Have Faces*.

- 1990 Wilson, A.N., *C.S. Lewis: A Biography*, New York: Norton

A.N. Wilson identifies cults concerning Lewis, hence Lewis is becoming a mythic figure himself.

- 1990 Lane, D.F., ‘Resurrecting the “Ancient Unities”, the Incarnation of Myth and the Legend of Logres’ in *Mythlore* (Spring 1990) No 61, Vol. 16 No 3

Lane observes that Lewis saw the greater, or more real, humiliated into the lesser and, from Lewis’ theory of transposition, the lesser, or reality of earthly existence points in turn to the greater or higher reality of eternal existence. This has consequences for myth, especially in Lewis’ *Cosmic Trilogy*, since the cosmos myth of the first two novels is ‘transposed into the chaotic world of history’ (Lane, 1990, p9) in *That Hideous Strength*. Lewis brings into the ‘world of disunity, the figure of Merlin ... resurrected into the landscape of Bragdon Wood ...(Merlin is) emblematic of what Owen Barfield ... terms the “ancient unities”’ (Lane, 1990, p10). Bultitude the bear is another relic ‘of Barfield’s “ancient unities” introduced into a world of increasing division’ (Lane, 1990, p12) and unable to ‘distinguish between subject and object’ (Lane, 1990, p12). Lane also considers the notion of disunity, symbolic space and imagery in Lewis’ works.

1990 Thorson, S., 'Truth, Myth, and Revelation in Lewis' in *CSL: The Bulletin of the New York C.S. Lewis Society*, (April 1990) No 246.

Thorson observes that the deep meaning Lewis found in myth is 'similar to that we get from metaphors of poetry; and ... myth and metaphor are closely related' (Thorson, 1990, p1). This leads Thorson to outline Lewis' views on myth, metaphor and his debate with Barfield. The problem of imagination and different kinds of truth emerges. Thus there is the truth of fact, or observable actuality, and the more metaphysical kinds of truth, or what Lewis considered to be reflections of reality. Myth evokes the latter kind of truth for Lewis and this is 'meaning-truth' (Thorson, 1990, p4) of the kind Lewis saw in some Old Testament revelations.

1990	Fides, P.S.,	‘C.S. Lewis the Myth-Maker’ in <i>A Christian for all Christians, Essays in Honour of C.S. Lewis</i> , Walker, A., and Patrick, J., (Eds.) Hodder & Stoughton.
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Fides considers the relationship of myth and fact in Lewis' writings. Dream-like qualities are involved in myth, but in the story of Christ we come out of the dreams sown by God in the minds of pagans and into the 'daylight of the Great Fact' (Fides, 1990, p133) of Christ's story. This story retains its myth qualities whilst being a fact. From the myth man can gain imaginative enjoyment, and the truths that myth imparts that are beyond factual truths. The pagan stories of dying gods are the product of God's mythopoeia. Lewis' myth-making is compared to Tolkien's theory of the sub-creator, thus Lewis is sowing seeds or dreams which equally are open to 'becoming fact in the incarnation' (Fides, 1990, p135) as were the dreams sown by God in the minds of pagan men. Lewis is an experimenter, exploring 'the way that myth becomes fact' (Fides, 1990, p136) in his use of myths related within the larger myths of his fictions. This works in a similar way to Shakespeare's plays within his plays. Lewis places his fantasies before, after and alongside the Incarnation, and Fides considers the various advantages of each approach.

1991	Smith, L.H. jr.,	'C.S. Lewis and the Making of Metaphor' in Schakel & Huttar, (Eds.), <i>Word and Story in C.S. Lewis</i> , University of Missouri Press
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Lyle Smith explores metaphor theory and Lewis, commenting on Barfield, I.A. Richards. Smith also notes that both Barfield and Ernst Cassirer 'posited the radically metaphorical nature of language, asserting that as language itself first developed, it was not only metaphorical in nature, but inextricably intertwined with mental processes that produced myth' (Smith, 1991, p12). Smith notes that spiritual and insensible aspects of reality are apprehended through metaphor, according to Dabney Hart Adams and Francis Morris.

- 1991 Wolfe, G., 'Essential Speech: Language and Myth in the Ransom Trilogy' in Schakel & Huttar, (Eds.) (1991) *Word and Story in C.S. Lewis*, University of Missouri Press

For Wolfe, Lewis viewed the Incarnation as standing 'between the extremes of mythic and rationalistic consciousness' (Wolfe, 1991, p65). He views the Ransom books as Lewis' 'attempt to revive the reader's mythopathic capacity' (Wolfe, 1991, p65). This involves a re-sensitising to the spiritual and Lewis used his ability to invest new life into ancient myth by putting their 'symbolic patterns' (Wolfe, 1991, p66) into new contexts. Barfield's 'ancient unity' theory is considered with regard to language, for example, the Malacandran word *hnakra* means 'both "enemy" and "beloved"' (Wolfe, 1991, p67). Reality is 'as dense with meaning as myth' (Wolfe, 1991, p68), and Ransom realises this when he learns that the triple distinction of myth and truth, and both from fact, is terrestrial. This distinction was supposedly one in the Incarnation, and there is thus a sense of trying to recover 'incarnational language and imagination' (Wolfe, 1991, p73).

- 1991 Haigh, J.D., 'C.S. Lewis and the Tradition of Visionary Romance' in (1991) *Word and Story*, Schakel, P.J., and Huttar, C.A., (Eds.) University of Missouri Press

Haigh considers the influence of myth on Lewis, including Norse myths and 'Northernness', Jung's archetypes and various essays on story written by Lewis, and mythopoeic works by authors such as Morris, Haggard, Tolkien, Lindsay and MacDonald that Lewis enjoyed. Northrop Frye's views of William Morris and Tolkien are considered.

- 1991 Piehler, P., 'Myth or Allegory? Archetype and Transcendence in the Fiction of C.S. Lewis' in (1991) *Word and Story*, Schakel, P.J., and Huttar, C.A., (Eds.) Uni. Missouri Press

Piehler notes that allegory, symbolism and myth appear to be closer than might be suspected according to Lewis' comments on Lord Mirth's park in *The Allegory of Love*. Medieval allegorical elements emerge, such as the medieval allegorical motif of the paradisaal garden. Lewis is considered as having 'trodden the way of the archetypal hero' (Piehler, 1991, p211). For Piehler the author 'participates in the aesthetic worlds he creates' (Piehler, 1991, p211), and Lewis wanted his readers to participate in order to heal their souls.

- 1991 Manlove, C.N., “‘Caught up into the Larger Pattern’:
Images and Narrative Structures in C.S.
Lewis’s Fiction’ in (1991) *Word and Story
in C.S. Lewis*, University of Missouri
Press, pp. 256-276

Manlove notes Lewis’ view that ‘what is myth in one world may be fact in some other, or that a story may prefigure truth, as did pagan anticipations of the story of Christ, such as the stories of Adonis, Osiris, or the vision in Virgil’s Fourth Eclogue’ (Manlove, 1991, p257). It is the narrative sequence that comes true, for Manlove, but ‘Not every story has the potency of myth’ (Manlove, 1991, p257). This special potency is ‘subjectively felt, not measured’ (Manlove, 1991, p257). Lewis’ stories can be viewed as ‘factual realizations or recreations of myths in our world’ (Manlove, 1991, p258) and Manlove notes examples such as the *sorns* and our myth of the Cyclops, Eve and *Perelandra*, Christ’s sacrifice and Aslan’s in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and the Cupid and Psyche myth retold in *Till We Have Faces*. Lewis’ tales do not ‘overtly refer to the Christian patterns they contain’ (Manlove, 1991, p266). Instead these patterns are ‘stumbled upon’ (Manlove, 1991, p266). Small events take on larger significance in ever greater patterns, thus ‘family squabbles’ (Manlove, 1991, p267) emerge as ‘part of the Cupid and Psyche myth’ (Manlove, 1991, p267) and, in turn, this myth is ‘itself part of a still larger Christian reality’ (Manlove, 1991, p267).

- 1991 Buning, M., ‘*Perelandra* in the Light of Modern
Allegorical Theory’ in Schakel & Huttar,
(Eds.) (1991) *Word and Story in C.S.
Lewis*, University of Missouri Press

Buning notes Lewis’ elevated view, in his later criticism, of myth which came ‘at the expense of allegory’ (Buning, 1991, p283), and is ‘in line with much modern criticism which, in its search for certain recurrent archetypal patterns and symbols, tends to attribute evaluative force to mythopoeic fiction’ (Buning, 1991, p283). For Buning, ‘the term “myth,” when used in this way, is the heir of “symbol” in the old controversy over allegory and symbolism’ (Buning, 1991, p283). Orwell’s *Animal Farm* is cited as an example of a tale that ‘transcends its allegorical significance and becomes a full-fledged myth’ (Buning, 1991, p283) according to Lewis in his essay on Orwell. However, Buning argues that the qualities Lewis attributes to myth, such as its open-ended re-interpretation, are also applicable to allegory. Thus, for Buning, ‘myth and allegory overlap in important ways since the latter is the narrative encapsulation of the former, and insofar as myth is verbal it is highly structured, as Lévi-Strauss’s theory of the logic of “primitive thought” (*pensée sauvage*) has made clear’ (Buning, 1991, p284). In support of this view, Buning offers various binary oppositions which myth and allegory ‘mediate symbolically’ (Buning, 1991, p284). Lewis’ Ransom trilogy and *The Allegory of Love*, along with various modern theorists’ views on allegory and symbolism, are considered by Buning. Buning also briefly refers to the work of the myth theorist Mircea Eliade.

- 1991 Simmons, C. L., and
Simmons, J., 'The Silver Chair and Plato's Allegory of the Cave: The Archetype of Spiritual Liberation' *Mythlore*, (Summer, 1991) No.66, Vol. 17, No.1.

Simmons and Simons explore Lewis' use of Plato's cave allegory as an archetype of spiritual liberation.

- 1991 (Oct.) Martin, R.E., 'Myth and Icon: The Cosmology of C.S. Lewis' "Space Trilogy" doctoral dissertation, The Florida State University

Martin applies Lewis' concept that the temporal sequence of images in a true literary myth build up an 'atemporal intuitive impression' (Martin, 1991) suggesting Man, Nature and Super-Nature relationships. Martin's dissertation proposes that a literal image emerges from Lewis' Cosmic Trilogy. An icon is inferred from this image and this suggests an object of contemplation, when considered as a literary form, whilst its function is that of a 'tool for religious devotion' (Martin, 1991). Martin has drawn significance from Lewis' modified ideas of medieval cosmology. Drawing upon details worked out from Lewis' space trilogy, alignment is found when co-ordinates are plotted in abstract space. These suggest the picture of a 'central tree in a walled circular garden which forms the summit of a mountain' (Martin, 1991) and this is 'constructed according to the medieval cosmological principles of the inversion of hierarchy, the reversal of perspective, and the macrocosm in the microcosm' (Martin, 1991).

- 1991 Lutton, J.H., 'Wasteland Myth in C.S. Lewis's *That Hideous Strength*' in *Forms of the Fantastic, Selected Essays from the Third International Conference on the Fantastic in Literature and Film*, Hokenson, J., and Pearce, H., (Eds.) Greenwood Press

Lutton surveys the 'comparative settings, characters, and stories' (Lutton, 1991, p85), elements and steps of Wasteland myth in T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and C.S. Lewis' *That Hideous Strength*. The figures of the Fisher King, Quester, and Prophet are considered in both works. Jane Studdock is Lewis' prophet and has some resemblance to Madam Sosostri whilst as a woman she recalls Belladonna. However, Jane is distinct from Belladonna in that she evolves 'in the direction of the Hyacinth Girl' (Lutton, 1991, p77) and towards being a True Prophet. Mark Studdock is Lewis' Quester figure and whilst Jane is drawn to Ransom's 'Grail Castle' community, Mark is drawn to 'the Tower of Babel' (Lutton, 1991, p78). Ransom is an unusual Fisher King because his wound 'is in the foot, not the reproductive organs' (Lutton, 1991, p78) and is not for a sin but part of his sacrificial role. In contrast to Eliot what Lewis 'sees is not just cultural decline but an assault by demonic forces' (Lutton, 1991, p85).

- 1991 Patterson, N-L., 'Always Winter and Never Christmas, Symbols of Time in Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia' in *Mythlore* (Autumn 1991) No. 67 Vol. 18 No. 1

Father Christmas and Aslan are figures involved in the cyclic progression of time in Narnia, in contrast the White Witch is an image of temporal stasis. For Patterson Lewis' gift-bearing Father Christmas has Anglican connotations, rather than the Father Christmas of the Puritans. The Father Time figure in the Chronicles recalls fairy stories of the king under the mountain and has connotations with the vegetation gods lying dormant underground during winter.

- 1991 Holbrook, D., *The Skeleton in the Wardrobe, C.S. Lewis's Fantasies: A Phenomenological Study*, Bucknell University Press

Holbrook relies more on psychology than phenomenology, omitting any mention of the German phenomenologists Cassirer, Husserl and Heidegger and focussing instead on sexual symbolism and hidden sexual desires. For Holbrook the fantasy worlds of Lewis are fraught with the author's reality, 'He yearns for a kind of "It" that is a new world in which these dangers do not exist' (Holbrook, 1991, p126). Although Lewis recognised that creative myth has 'liberating effects' (Holbrook, 1991, p285) his works are restricted through their cosmology, morality and Lewis' yearning for order. Lewis' notion that myth frees us from 'our normal mode of consciousness' is prevented, for Holbrook, by Lewis' insistence that 'Christian myth is the only one that is true' (Holbrook, 1991, 286).

- 1991 Frontgia, T., 'Archetypes, Stereotypes, and the Female Hero, Transformations in Contemporary Perspectives' in *Mythlore* (Autumn 1991) No. 67, Vol. 18, No. 1

For too long the hero archetype has meant the Warrior. This has emerged through cultural bias and is continued in Joseph Campbell's work on myth, 'his paradigmatic pattern of the monomyth presupposes exclusively male heroes' (Frontgia, 1991, p15). However Campbell went some way to refute this view of his work in an interview, proposing that heroic actions are undertaken by women. Figures of female heroes are explored in works by Tolkien and Lewis.

- 1993 Filmer, K., *The Fiction of C.S. Lewis, Mask and Mirror*, St. Martin's Press, Inc.

Filmer explores Lewis' novels as 'both mask and mirror for the man himself' (Filmer, 1993, p2). She identifies Lewis as a contradictory figure and tries to reveal insight into his contradictions by exploring the imagery in his fictions. The result of Lewis' attempts

to show that 'Pagan images are 'baptised' ... by Christianity' (Filmer, 1993, p13) contributes to the curious consequence that 'Christianity is submerged by the Pagan images' (Filmer, 1993, p13) according to Filmer. In Filmer's view Lewis promoted 'Lewisianity - a strange, idiosyncratic blend of beliefs, prejudices, fears and apprehensions' (Filmer, 1993, p13). Lewis' choice of models for women is questioned, since Lewis' tended towards the Great Mother instead of the Virgin Mary in Filmer's view. The Green Lady being shown her image by the demonic Weston reminds Filmer of the myth of Narcissus, 'It is very clearly a temptation to the lady to fall in love with her Self' (Filmer, 1993, p33). Filmer also discusses self and individuation in the light of good and evil, Narnian images of good and evil, misogyny, and the political dimension of Lewis' writings.

1993	Manlove, C.,	<i>The Chronicles of Narnia, Patterning of a Fantastic World</i> , Twayne's Masterwork Studies: Children's and Young Adult Literature, Lecker, R., (General Editor) Twayne Publishers
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With his Narnia works Lewis 'writes mythopoeia within a resonant literary and biblical tradition' (Manlove, 1993, p6). Lewis 'expected through myth ... not only to see the pattern of holiness, but to *feel* it' (Manlove, 1993, p6). His 'conception of Narnia is "organic"' (Manlove, 1993, p10). However for Tolkien there are 'too many ill-assorted pieces' (Manlove, 1993, p12) in Narnia, such as 'a Father Christmas out of myth' (Manlove, 1993, p30), to make a cohesive "sub-creation". *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* captures 'something of the primal rhythm of Christian history, within the idiom of another world' (Manlove, 1993, p31). Themes such as imagination, self, unity, literary influences, use of imagery and 'grand design' are considered. Manlove looks for 'narrative patterns' (Manlove, 1993, p76) and finds Northrop Frye's 'narrative movements in literature' (Manlove, 1993, p76) in *The Silver Chair* as well as themes from the Gospels. Lewis' tales 'partake' in the Christian stories.

1993	Branson, D.A.,	'Arthurian Elements in <i>That Hideous Strength</i> ' in <i>Mythlore</i> (Autumn 1993) No. 74, Vol. 19, No. 4
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Merlin, Logres, Britain, the Fisher King and Pendragon are considered in *That Hideous Strength*. Branson also ponders if Jane Studdock might parallel Guinevere.

1994	Hannay, M.,	'The Mythology of <i>Out of the Silent Planet</i> ' in <i>Mythlore</i> (Spring 1994) No. 76, Vol. 20, No. 2
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Lewis' science fiction books have created a cosmic mythology which has a quality of being 'plausible ... (and) authentic' (Hannay, 1994, p20). This is a 'mythic system' (Hannay, 1994, p20) in which Earth is the silent planet. Christian faith and outer space

are considered, along with the mythology of the *hrossa*. Hannay notes that ‘allusions to classical myth’ (Hannay, 1994, p21) are made by Ransom. On Malacandra Ransom learns that the Malacandrians’ mythology links notions of the female with Venus. The question of truth emerging from mythology is touched upon.

1994 Myers, D.T., *C.S. Lewis in Context*, the Kent State University Press, pp. 182-213.

Although Doris T. Myers emphasises language issues and theory, her book also offers useful insight into ‘the context of myth and history’ (Myers, 1994, p182) specifically in Lewis’ adoption of Orual’s autobiographical perspective in *Till We Have Faces*. History will become myth, Myers points out, to future ages who will look back, through the hindsight of the Incarnation, to the age and history of ‘Psyche, Orual and the god-husband’ (Myers, 1994, p212). According to Myers, a relationship that is not set but changeable emerges between Orual’s age, the future view of her age, and the Divine Nature.

1995 Christopher, J.R., ‘C.S. Lewis’ Linguistic Myth’ *Mythlore* (Summer 1995) No. 79, Vol. 21, No.1.

Joe Christopher analyses the changes in Lewis’ use of the mythical Mercury in Lewis’ ‘The Planets’ and ‘The Birth of Language’ poems, and *That Hideous Strength*. Lewis’ comments on Mercury in *The Discarded Image* are also considered. Platonic notions structure Lewis’ use of Mercury in ‘The Birth of Language’.

1995 Lindskoog, K., *Finding the Landlord*, Cornerstone Press

Lindskoog notes Lewis’ search for that ‘special sensation’ (Lindskoog, 1995, pxvi) that Norse mythology imparted. She describes it as a stabbing that provided such Joy that eventually the mere memory of that Joy itself evoked such Joy. Lindskoog comments on *Pilgrim’s Regress* include mention of morality and mythology and Lewis’ use of the myth of Semele. Lindskoog also notes Lewis’ personification of Reason in *Pilgrim’s Regress* and the personification of Reason as Athene in his posthumously published poem, entitled by Hooper ‘Reason’. For Lindskoog this poem should have been entitled ‘Reason and Imagination’ since ‘Demeter personifies imagination. (and) In Greek mythology Demeter stood for harvest and fertility’ (Lindskoog, 1995, p124). Reason and imagination were two conflicting halves of Lewis’ mind and ‘his two modes of knowing’ (Lindskoog, 1995, p125). This dichotomy of ways of understanding emerges in *Till We Have Faces* and in the comments about mythology spoken by God to the pilgrim John in *Pilgrim’s Regress*.

1995 Milward, P.S.J., *A Challenge to C.S. Lewis*, Associated University Presses

Peter Milward attacks various views held by Lewis. He particularly discusses myth during his chapter on Lewis and allegory. Milward was a student of Lewis and in a letter to Milward Lewis explained his view of myth as a higher form than allegory. Lewis' 'condemnation of allegorical interpretation' (Milward, 1995, p17) probably emerged due to his friendship with Tolkien, according to Milward. However, Milward maintains that Lewis' views blinkered him to 'something universally human ... (and) deep in the hearts of every audience' (Milward, 1995, p20), a kind of everyman quality in certain medieval literary characters. Milward also argues that Lewis' view of allegory in *The Allegory of Love* is flawed.

1996 Nelson, M., 'One Mythology Among Many: The Spiritual Odyssey of C.S. Lewis' in *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, Vol. 72, p632.

Michael Nelson notes that the widely different reactions of various critics, biographers and Christians to Lewis has had the result that 'Lewis has become something of a mythic figure himself ... the mythmaking began almost immediately' (Nelson, 1996, p632).

1996 Filmer-Davies, K., *Fantasy Fiction and Welsh Myth, Tales of Belonging*, Macmillan.

Kath Filmer-Davies (1996) observes Lewis' *Sehnsucht* and the deep longing and desire of mythic northernness within Lewis' mythopoeia.

1996 Flieger, V., 'The Language of Myth' in *Mythlore* (Summer 1996) No. 81, Vol. 21, No. 3

Flieger considers the importance of words for writers such as Tolkien, Lewis and Eddison 'who used language to invent myth' (Flieger, 1996, p5). For Flieger's article, myth is considered as 'words in the act of utterance ... a story in the telling' (Flieger, 1996, p4). Barfield proposed that language can evoke a 'felt change of consciousness' (Barfield in Flieger, 1996, p4). This is a shift in 'the very world' (Flieger, 1996, p4) brought about through language. Flieger also considers the role of the hearer who receives the utterance.

1998 Lobdell, J.C., 'An Irritation of Oysters: C.S. Lewis and the Myth in Mythopoeia' (Spring, 1998) in *Extrapolation*, Vol.39 No1

Jared Lobdell finds the terms myth and mythopoeic problematic because of the great contrast between literary figures who use these words. Whilst Frye's use suggests to Lobdell 'a pure form - of story' (Lobdell, 1998, p70) Lewis' use is more concerned with 'world creation' (Lobdell, 1998, p70).

1998 Hein, R., *Christian Mythmakers, C.S. Lewis, Madeleine L'Engle, J.R.R. Tolkien, George MacDonald, G.K. Chesterton & Others*, Cornerstone Press Chicago

Rolland Hein locates Lewis among Christian mythmakers as well as discussing Lewis' notions of *Sehnsucht* and myth, myth as a vehicle of reality, 'the "otherness" of mythic goodness' (Hein, 1998, p223), and 'transmuting mythic power' (Hein, 1998, p234). Mythic reality has varying degrees for Hein, being lower in terrestrial experience but still there in nature although it is higher in the 'celestial spheres' (Hein, 1998, p229) explored in Lewis' science fiction novels. Orual refuses to see mythic reality as Psyche does in *Till We Have Faces*. A mythic aura emerges in often quite ordinary seeming 'aspects of life' (Hein, 1998, p231) as Lewis shows, for example, in *That Hideous Strength*.

1999 Manlove, C., *The Fantasy Literature of England*, MacMillan Press, p86.

In *The Fantasy Literature of England*, (1999) Manlove observes that 'Lewis portrays the Cupid and Psyche myth as partaking in the pattern of the future Christian story, in his *Till We Have Faces*' (Manlove, 1999, p86).

1999 Edwards, J.R., 'Magic Rings in C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien' in *CSL: the Bulletin of the New York C.S. Lewis Society*, Vol. 30, No. 9

Edwards comments on the use of magic rings, and the way Tolkien built his mythology on a series of rings. The use of rings is considered in *The Magician's Nephew*, Jewish mythology, Greek mythology, Norse myth and Wagner.

2000	Duriez, C.,	<i>The C.S. Lewis Encyclopedia, A Complete Guide to His Life, Thought, and Writings</i> , Crossway Books
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Colin Duriez identifies Lewis' desire to create a 'theology of myth' (Duriez, 2000, p134). Duriez also notes the inner tensions of myth that made myth a problematic medium for Lewis.

2000	Gorsch, R.,	'Re-Mythologizing Outer Space with C.S. Lewis and Cordwainer Smith' in <i>Space and Beyond, The Frontier Theme in Science Fiction</i> , Greenwood Press
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The old mythology of space as a bleak vacuum is challenged by Lewis. Similarly Cordwainer Smith also rejected populist views of space in his writings. Whilst Lewis repopulates other worlds with 'mythical beings' (Gorsch, 2000, p123), Smith introduced dragons. For these writers scientific truth is exposed as 'just another newfangled mythology' (Gorsch, 2000, p123) whilst old myths turn out to have some element of empirical truth. Truth and myth could be 'mixed up in spite of our impression that we have passed decisively from a superstitious to a scientific worldview' (Gorsch, 2000, p124). In *Out of the Silent Planet*, Ransom's view of space has been gleaned from the mythology built up by writers such as H.G. Wells, and is exposed in Lewis' book as 'indoctrination into a misguided mythology' (Gorsch, 2000, p124). Thus a de-mythologizing occurs before Ransom's view of space is re-mythologized. This re-mythologizing turns out to be a return to the old mythology of 'High Medieval Christianity' (Gorsch, 2000, p124) thus reintroducing God's presence and casting the *eldila* as the angelic orders. Lewis also reinvented the old myth of war in heaven of the kind told by Milton. However, man is de-centred in Lewis' 'synthetic mythology' (Gorsch, 2000, p125). Cordwainer Smith's view of space is more terror orientated than Lewis' imagining of space as heavenly.

2000	Lindskoog, K.,	'Ungit and Orual: Facts, Mysteries, and Epiphanies' in <i>CSL: The Bulletin of the New York C.S. Lewis Society</i> , Vol. 32, Nos. 7&8
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The etymology of various words in Lewis' fictions are considered. Ungit is identified with a Babylonian fertility goddess, the Greek Aphrodite and 'the earth-womb archetype' (Lindskoog, 2000, p3). The earth as womb also emerges in a poem by Lewis entitled 'Break Sun, My Crusted Earth', according to Lindskoog.

2001 King, D.W., *C.S. Lewis, Poet, the Legacy of His Poetic Impulse*, The Kent State University Press

Don W. King explores the importance of Norse myth and Wagner to Lewis' poetic impulse and sensibilities, particularly in *Dymer*.

2002 Nicholi, A., Jr. *The Question of God, C.S. Lewis and Sigmund Freud Debate God, Love, Sex, and the Meaning of Life*, The Free Press

Nicholi includes comment on Lewis' and myth, the gospels as myths, and G.K. Chesterton and Tolkien's influence on Lewis' view of the Incarnation as myth and fact, observing the role of feeling in Lewis' acceptance of the Grand Miracle.

Conclusion

Clearly the topic of Lewis and myth is incredibly rich and has sustained many critical discussions, including philological, psychological, epistemological, medieval, poetical, philosophical, theological analyses and Christian apologetics. Whilst each approach contributes varying degrees of insight such heterogeneity can but generate a fragmentary view of Lewis' use of myth. Cassirer's myth theoretics, in contrast, avoids reduction since it is a more holistic, symbolic philosophy that incorporates a very broad view of myth, not only as story but also as world-view, a kind of thinking and unusual sort of causation, action, image, symbol and dream. For Cassirer these things contribute to the holistic phenomena of the symbolic form of myth.

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